

Associated Press style is the base editorial style followed by communicators at The Ohio State University. This document outlines words and terms commonly used by communicators at Ohio State. It also notes instances in which the university breaks from AP style.

This guide is intended to supplement Ohio State's main style website: **apstylebook.com/osu.** The website features the most up-to-date version of university style and you are encouraged to use it as the primary style resource whenever possible. If you have questions about any entries in this document, contact University Communications at style@osu.edu.

#### Α

# abbreviations

Avoid abbreviations in running text except when part of official names. If the name represented by an abbreviation may be unknown to some readers, use the full name in the initial reference.

College of Arts and Sciences (not Arts & Sciences) August (not Aug.)

Procter & Gamble (official name) Large Binocular Telescope (LBT)

## academic courses

Capitalize the main words in titles of specific courses, but not names used in a general sense.

Economics 200; Science 111; economics courses; sociology

Capitalize all nouns and adjectives referring to languages, countries and nationalities.

a French course; an English course

# academic programs

The term "program" should not be capitalized unless used as an official part of a title.

The Department of Psychology's program offers specializations in clinical psychology, counseling psychology and developmental psychology. She's a member of the Health Sciences Scholars Program.

# academic units

Capitalize the official names of academic units. Do not capitalize the name in informal reference.

Department of Art Education; the art education department

#### **ACT**

Acceptable on first reference. Do not use periods.

# **ADA** compliance

Publications (both print and Web) should be made available in alternative formats to students, faculty and staff with disabilities, and others with disabilities who are unable to read traditional print and online materials. If applicable, communications staff will discuss the ADA compliance process with clients upon initiation of design/editorial projects.

## Affirmative action/nondiscrimination statements

The Ohio State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in its admission and employment programs. Use the following when applicable:

#### Short statement:

The Ohio State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution.

# The long statement:

The Ohio State University is committed to building a diverse faculty and staff for employment and promotion to ensure the highest quality workforce, to reflect human diversity and to improve opportunities for minorities and women. The university embraces human diversity and is committed to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and eliminating discrimination. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status—defined as age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran status—is prohibited.

For further information, contact the Office of Human Resources, 1590 N. High St., Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43201-2190 or 614-292-4164.

# **African American**

No hyphen for the noun or adjective. Both *African American* and *black* are acceptable.

African Americans; African American students

#### Ages

Use numerals.

## **Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI)**

Abbreviate after first full reference. Do not use periods.

# alma mater

Do not italicize.

# alumnus, alumni

Alumnus is the singular, masculine form. For references to women, use alumna (singular) or alumnae (plural). Alumni is plural for a group of both men and women.

## **American Indian**

Native American is also acceptable.



#### ampersand

Avoid using an ampersand unless it is part of an official title.

College of Arts and Sciences Kuhn Honors & Scholars House

#### apostrophes

Make abbreviations plural by adding s. MBAs, RNs, BAs, W-2s, IDs

No apostrophe is needed for decades. 1990s, 2010s

## **Asian American**

No hyphen for the noun or the adjective.

Asian Americans; Asian American students

## autumn, autumn semester

Lowercase references to seasons and academic periods.

## В

## **Big Ten**

Ten is always spelled out in this usage.

#### black

Both black and African American are acceptable.

# Blackwell, the

Use lowercase *the* in running text.

They stayed at the Blackwell last night.

# **Board of Trustees**

Capitalize the words *Board* and *Trustees* when referring to Ohio State's Board of Trustees. Do not capitalize *board* or *trustees* when used alone or in second reference.

When referring to other boards and trustees, use lowercase.

Ohio State's Board of Trustees will meet today. His company's board of trustees approved the measure.

All university board members agreed.

## **BuckID**

No punctuation between letters.

## **bulleted lists**

Keep punctuation for bulleted lists at a minimum. Begin each item with a lowercase letter. Omit periods after items unless one or more of the items is a complete sentence. If the list completes a sentence begun in an introductory element, the final period is also omitted unless the items in the list are separated by commas or semicolons.

The required curriculum includes:

- a calculus course
- · an advanced physics course
- three chemistry courses

# bulleted lists (continued)

Ordinarily, commas are not used following a series of items. If the vertically listed items are phrases—especially long phrases—that grammatically complete the sentence containing them, commas may, but need not, be used. If commas are used, the last item is followed by a period.

*In preparation, the student:* 

- · earned a high score on the ACT,
- · studied extensively on related subjects,
- · talked with professionals in the field.

Note: It is not necessary to include and before the last item in the list.

#### C

## campus

Do not capitalize *north campus, south campus, Newark campus,* etc. Exception: West Campus is a formal name.

#### capitalization

Lowercase the word *university* when it is used alone in reference to Ohio State or another institution or when it is used in a generic sense.

He wants to attend Ohio State, although the university is far from home.

A general rule is that official names are capitalized; unofficial, informal, shortened or generic names are not. This rule applies to names of offices, buildings, schools, departments, programs, centers, institutes, etc. Phrases such as the center, the institute, the college or the museum are not capitalized.

Names of seasons, academic periods and one-time events are generally not capitalized.

autumn 2012; summer term; spring semester; orientation; spring break; commencement

#### chair

Use in all cases (not chairman, chairwoman or chairperson)

#### colleges

Capitalize the full, formal names of colleges, but lowercase shortened or informal versions.

the College of Engineering; the engineering college; the college

## course work

Two words.

#### curriculum/curricula

Curriculum is singular. Curricula and curriculums are plural.



#### D

## dates

Spell out months and days of the week; use numerals for years. Use no punctuation if listing just the month and the year, but set the year off with commas if using the day of the month.

May 2014

a February 5, 2014, deadline

Join us Wednesday, October 17, for a celebration.

Decades may be referred to in any of the following ways. (Note: No apostrophe is needed for 1990s, 2000s, etc.) the 1990s; the '90s; the nineties

## decision making, decision-making

Two words as a noun, hyphenated as an adjective.

Decision making was not the committee's strong point. She found the decision-making process easy.

## degrees

Capitalize the main words in the names of degrees when they are spelled out and capitalize abbreviations of degrees. Abbreviation of the degree name is acceptable on first reference. Do not use periods in abbreviations of degrees.

BA; BS; JD; MA; MBA; MS; PhD

Capitalization of names of degrees should match the registrar's official degree list. If the official degree name contains the words "of Science," the discipline is capitalized. (Refer to the *Bachelor of Science in Chemistry*, not the Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry or the Bachelor's degree in Chemistry.) Similar rules apply to references made to master's and doctoral degrees.

Do not capitalize academic degrees used in a general sense. Note that *bachelor's* and *master's* end in 's.

an associate degree; a bachelor's degree; a master's degree; a doctoral degree; a doctorate

In references to degrees, the word "degree" is not capitalized.

She earned her Master of Music degree.

Make plural abbreviations of degrees by adding s. MAs; PhDs; JDs

When they follow a person's name, qualifiers such as PhD and MD are preceded by a comma. A second comma follows the qualifier in running text.

William Turner, PhD

The latest article published by William Turner, PhD, was his third in six months.

## department names

Capitalize the full, formal names of departments, but lowercase shortened or informal versions.

the Department of Mechanical Engineering; the mechanical engineering department

## E

## email

No hyphen.

## emeritus

Emeritus is the singular, masculine form. For references to women, use emerita (singular) or emeritae (plural). Emeriti may serve as the plural for a group that is composed of men only or both men and women. Emeritus is lowercase in all forms (unless used before a name as a formal title).

professor emerita of art; professors emeriti; Emeritus Professor John Smith

## F

## faculty

Faculty can be plural or singular depending on whether the word is used to describe the group as a whole (singular) or to describe its members individually (plural). For clarity, try to rewrite the sentence to avoid a plural verb or use *faculty members*.

# **Fisher College of Business**

Use Fisher College of Business on first full reference. Use Fisher (not Fisher College) on second reference.

## foreign students

Use international students instead.

## fraternal groups

Capitalize the names of fraternities and sororities but not the words "fraternity," "sorority" and "chapter."

Ohio State chapter of Phi Beta Kappa fraternity

## full time/full-time

Hyphenate as an adjective before the noun; otherwise use two words.

He is a full-time worker. He works full time in the office.

# fundraising

One word, noun or adjective.

# G

#### grade point average (GPA)

Do not hyphenate. Do not use periods in abbreviation *(GPA)*. Use all caps.

# graduates with honors

Italicize but do not capitalize.

summa cum laude; magna cum laude; cum laude; magna cum laude with distinction

# groundbreaking

One word, noun or adjective.



#### н

## health care

Two words, no hyphen, noun or adjective.

She has health care at the company where she works. She has high health care costs.

## homepage

One word when referring to an Internet website.

#### **Honors and Scholars Programs**

Spell out and; no ampersand.

# http:// and www. in URLs

Delete http://and www. in web addresses if not essential. osu.edu

womensplace.osu.edu

#### international students

The phrase *international students* is preferable to *foreign students*.

#### Internet

Capitalize *Internet*. Also capitalize *the Net* or *the Web* when referring to the Internet. However, lowercase *web* when used with another word to form a compound noun or adjective: *website*, *webpage*, *web address*, etc.

J

#### K

# **Knowlton School of Architecture**

KSA is acceptable on second reference.

#### L

# laboratory

Spell out as part of an official name or in first reference. *Lab* is acceptable as a second reference.

## <u>landmarks</u>

Capitalize the main words in the official names of campus landmarks.

the Oval Mirror Lake

#### library

Do not use "main library." Use Thompson Library.

#### М

## main campus

Do not use "main campus." Use Columbus campus.

## majors and minors

Do not capitalize names of college studies, fields of study, curricula, majors, minors or programs unless a specific course is referred to or if using names of countries, nationalities, historical periods and languages.

She is majoring in political science.

He is a psychology major.

She changed her major from history to English.

#### Midwest, Midwestern

Uppercase references to the Midwest region of the United States, both noun and adjective.

Ohio State is located in the Midwest. He is from a small Midwestern town.

#### months

Months are not abbreviated in running text. A comma is not used for just the month and year.

September 2013

# multicultural, multidisciplinary

Single words.

#### N

## **Native American**

American Indian is also acceptable.

## noncredit

One word.

# nonprofit

One word.

## nonsexist language

Avoid words and usage that reinforce sexist stereotypes. Do not use *he* as an all-inclusive pronoun. *He or she* may be used, but the following solutions are preferable:

- Change the subject to the plural and use they, making sure there is verb/noun agreement.
- Change the singular third-person reference (he/she) to the second person (you).
- Use neutral words to replace personal pronouns (such as one or several).
- Repeat the noun or use a synonym.
- Revise the sentence to eliminate the pronoun altogether.

# nontraditional

One word.

# numbers

Spell out numbers *one* through *nine*. Use numerals for 10 or more and for fractions; spell out numbers that begin or end a sentence, or rewrite the sentence. (Exceptions: *Big Ten;* in special cases involving formal invitations, numbers 10 and above may be spelled out.)



## numbers (continued)

In running text, when referring to dollar amounts in millions, use the numeral and *million*, rather than zeros. \$6 million (not \$6,000,000)

## 0

## off campus

Two words; hyphenated as an adjective before a noun.

Ed lives off campus.

Ed has an off-campus apartment.

# Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC)

Abbreviate after the first full reference. Do not use periods.

#### **Ohio State Scholars Program**

Scholars Program is acceptable on second reference.

# **Ohio State University Extension**

Note there is no "The" used for this title. Second references: Extension or OSU Extension.

## **Ohio State University Research Foundation (OSURF)**

Note there is no "The" used for this title. Abbreviate after the first full reference. Do not use periods.

## on campus

Two words; hyphenated as an adjective before a noun. Sylvia works on campus. Sylvia has an on-campus job.

#### online

One word.

# ordinals

Write out *first* through *ninth*. Use numerals for *10th* and higher.

#### Р

#### percent

Spelling out *percent* is preferred, although % may be used if space is needed or in graphs or charts. Use numerals in front of percent, unless starting a sentence.

About 40 percent of the students responded. Forty percent of the faculty attended.

#### phone numbers

Use hyphens to separate the sections of phone numbers. Do not use "1" before toll-free numbers.

614-292-3980; 800-555-1212

# postdoctoral

One word. Postdoc is also acceptable.

#### president

## Lowercase when not used as a formal title.

the president of Ohio State; when President Smith visited the classroom

## **President's Club**

Apostrophe before *s*; lowercase *t* when *the* is used: *the President's Club* 



#### R

#### rankings

Do not use a hyphen when referring to a *top 10* or *top 25* program.

She hopes to stay in the top 10 of her class. Ohio State is a top 10 research university.

# Recreation and Physical Activity Center (RPAC)

RPAC is acceptable on second reference.

# regional campuses

The Ohio State University includes campuses in Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion and Newark and the Agricultural Technical Institute and Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster. In referring to regional campuses, the first reference in running text should be to the complete title.

The Ohio State University at Mansfield held a special student seminar.

Subsequent references: Ohio State Lima; Ohio State Mansfield; Ohio State Marion; Ohio State Newark; the Lima campus

# S

# **SAT**

Acceptable on first reference. Do not use periods.

# **Scarlet and Gray**

Uppercase when referring to the Buckeyes. Lowercase when referring to the colors.

She always roots for the Scarlet and Gray, even though she lives in Texas now.

She always wears scarlet and gray to the games.

# spring, spring semester

Lowercase references to seasons and academic periods.



#### Т

# The Ohio State University

After the first full reference to *The Ohio State University* (note the capital *T*), the following references are acceptable:

Ohio State; the university (always lowercase)

Do not use "OSU" to refer to The Ohio State University.

## The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Please see the medical center editorial style guide.

#### time

Use numerals in all cases and omit the zeros for on-the-hour times. Use periods for *a.m.* and *p.m.* To avoid confusion, use *noon* and *midnight* instead of 12 p.m. and 12 a.m.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. 1-3 p.m. 8 a.m. to noon

#### titles

Capitalize titles when they immediately precede a personal name. Titles following a personal name or used alone in place of a name are lowercase. Capitalize titles used in lists if they appear line for line as in an address.

Professor George Shaw George Shaw, professor, George Shaw is a professor.

#### U

## United States, U.S.

Use *United States* as the proper noun, *U.S.* as the adjective.

He was born in the United States. He is a U.S. citizen.

#### university

Lowercase when referring to Ohio State, unless used as part of the full name of the institution.

# university-wide

Hyphenate.

#### V

#### versus

Use v. when abbreviating "versus."

He's the prosecutor in Smith v. Jones. This Saturday, it's the Buckeyes v. the Hawkeyes.

#### W

## website

One word.

## **Wexner Center for the Arts**

Not "...of the Arts"

## **World Wide Web**

Three words, no hyphens, all initial caps. Second reference, the Web or the Net.



#### V

## year in school

Do not capitalize the words *freshman, sophomore, junior, senior* or *graduate* when they refer to the year in which a course is to be taken or to the classification of the student.

Tom thinks his graduate courses are easier than those he took as a senior.

#### Z

# zip code

Do not use a comma to separate a state abbreviation from the zip code in addresses.

Columbus, OH 43210