

Communications Office

893 West Street | Amherst, MA 01002 | 413.559.6062 | communications.hampshire.edu

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

The following guidelines are intended to enhance consistency and accuracy in the written communications of Hampshire College, with particular attention to local peculiarities and frequently asked questions. For additional guidelines on the mechanics of written communication, see *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition.

For matters of usage and principles of composition, we recommend *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White. If you have a question about the style guide, please contact the Hampshire College Office of Communications at communications@hampshire.edu.

General rule: We use what is called the “down” style of capitalization. In the “down” style, although proper names are capitalized, many words derived from or associated with proper names (brussel sprouts, board of trustees) may be lowercased with no loss of clarity or respect.

Academic Degrees

Use periods between letter of acronyms:
M.F.A., M.A., M.B.A., M.S.W., Ph.D., B.S., J.D., etc.

When spelled out, degrees should be lower-cased. Example: She holds a master's degree in neuroscience. They received their doctorate in philosophy.

Academic Terms

Do not uppercase term names unless the term has a proper noun such as January.

Example: fall term, January term, spring term, fall 2021, fall semester, spring 2021, spring semester.

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Academic Titles

professor emeritus (masculine); the professor emerita (feminine); professors emeriti (masc. or masc. and fem.) and emeritrix (gender neutral); professors emeritae (fem.). Note that emeritus and emerita are honorary designations and do not simply mean "retired."

Capitalize the term if it is used as a title in front of the person's name. Lowercase if following the name, e.g. Professor Emerita Smith or Emma Smith, professor emerita.

Exceptions include when the title is a proper noun, such as a named or endowed chair.

Alumni, Alumnae

Hampshire uses different forms of "alumni" and "alumnae" to describe Hampshire's graduates and other former students:

alumni (adj.): Although Hampshire uses the masculine/feminine "alumni/ae" in certain formal references requiring an adjective, that construction has been shortened to "alumni" in most other contexts, i.e.; "alumni events" and "alumni relations office."

"alum" or "alums": Although "alumnus" and "alumna" may be used in reference to individuals, the shortened versions "alum" (s.) or "alums" (pl.) are more frequently used to avoid gender-linked words.

Academic Subject or Area of Study

Academic subjects and areas of study are lower-cased unless they form part of a department name or an official course name or are themselves proper nouns (e.g., English, Latin).

Example: "He earned a Ph.D. in animal science" or "At Hampshire, they studied chemistry and English."

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Buildings

Capitalize official names of buildings (Jerome Liebling Center for Film, Photography and Video). Write out the full names of buildings the first time you reference them for clarity, i.e. Franklin Patterson Hall.

Example: The event will be held in Franklin Patterson Hall (FPH) on Tuesday, April 3. FPH is also where refreshments will be served following the event.

Class Year

Indicate the entering class year and semester of an alum or student at the end of the name, with no punctuation. All alums and students: year then semester. For example, Sam Jones 06S *not* Sam Jones S06.

Parent class years are indicated with a P in front of their child's entering year, e.g. P89.

When using a possessive, add the apostrophe and s after the year of the alum or parent. It is best to avoid this usage as much as possible through rephrasing.

Correct: Alum Leidy Churchman 98F's paintings are absorbing meditations on consciousness

Preferred: The paintings of alum Leidy Churchman 98F are absorbing meditations on consciousness.

College (an exception to the "down" style)

When "the College" is used as a stand-in for Hampshire College, College should ***always*** be capitalized. (The College will be closed on Friday.)

When college is used as a general term, it is not capitalized. (Many young people continue on to college.)

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Centers and Offices

Capitalize when part of full formal name (the Women's Center). Use lower case when used informally or as a general term.

Example:

The Hampshire College Admissions Office offers tours. The admissions office is open from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

The Lebrón-Wiggins Pran Cultural Center is located at Hampshire College. The center is open from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Committees

Lower case when used informally (finance committee, educational policy committee, the committee on reappointments and promotions).

Upper case as part of formal name (the Hampshire College Committee on Faculty Reappointments and Promotions).

Corporate Names (Board of Trustees and Other Entities)

Capitalize only when full corporate name is used, e.g.; "The Board of Trustees of Hampshire College has announced its policy..." Lower case for informal use, as "the board of trustees met...or....the board met on to decide..."

Course Names

Official names of courses should be capitalized. Do not italicize, underline, or set off with quotation marks.

Example: "My favorite class to teach is Introduction to Descriptive Grammar."

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Dates and Timezones

"December 2007," not "December of 2007."

January 2007 was cold. January 24, 2007, was cold.

Please note: a comma should come after both the date and the year.

He graduated on May 20. **Do not use *th* or *nd* with dates**, e.g. He graduated on May 20th is unnecessary. May 20 says it just as clearly.

Do NOT use terms such as "today" or "tonight" or "tomorrow" in publicizing events. Use the exact date. If you do use today, tonight, or tomorrow (for social posts, etc.), include the date to give clearer context, e.g. The lecture will be held tonight, June 23, at Franklin Patterson Hall.

Timezones: EDT refers to Eastern Daylight Time and is used during spring and summer. EST refers to Eastern Standard Time and refers to fall and winter. For clarity and simplicity, use only ET when referring to our timezone.

Funds

Lower case informal uses (the alumni fund, the Hampshire parents fund, etc.).
Upper case when part of the formal name (The Hampshire College Annual Fund).

Geographical Terms

Capitalize only when identifying a region or political entity (the Northeast, West Coast, Eastern Europe, Middle East, Western Massachusetts - the latter is a style choice).

Lower case when designating a direction (traveling northeast). Capitalize proper noun locations such as the Pioneer Valley, the Berkshires, etc.

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Locations

National: Write out full names of cities and states whenever possible. If you must abbreviate states, use two-letter caps for state abbreviations, e.g., Vermont is VT, Massachusetts is MA, etc.

(Note: If you wish to abbreviate "Los Angeles," write "L.A.," as Louisiana has cornered the market on "LA.")

International: Write out full names of foreign countries. Write out names of small foreign cities and towns, followed by the country ("Sarnath, India"). There's no need to include the country when mentioning major foreign cities (e.g., "Paris," not "Paris, France").

Lecture Series

The term "lecture series" is capitalized when it refers to a specific series and is part of the proper name, as in: "Eqbal Ahmad Lecture Series." When referring to individual lectures in a series, titles should be capitalized and placed in quotation marks, e.g. Stephen King delivered a lecture on "Horror and the Supernatural in Modern Fiction" in Franklin Patterson Hall. King visits campus next month to speak on "From the Page to the Screen: Translating Text to the Movies."

Numbers

Use 1990s (not 1990's unless possessive or to clarify meaning).

Nineteenth century, twentieth century; do not use 19th century, 20th century. (There are exceptions. E.g. "Hampshire's 50th Anniversary Celebration")

Spell out numbers one through ten (one, two, etc.). Above ten, use number (65, 106, etc.) except when the number is used at the beginning of a sentence. When a number starts a sentence, it is always written out ("Sixty-four students came to the meeting."). Significant round numbers (fifty, thousand) may be written out.

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Use zeros with figures under one dollar but not stated as cents (\$0.75 or 75 cents, not \$.75).

Write out "percent." Do not use "%" after a number (11 percent, not 11%). The % sign can be used in tables and graphs or statistical information.

Use a comma with numbers more than one thousand (\$1,000 not \$1000).

Dollar sign replaces the word "dollars," as in: \$12 million or 12 million dollars, but not \$12 million dollars.

Offices

Capitalize when referring to an official name of an office, e.g. Office of the Dean of Student Life. Not when used generically, as in admissions office.

Organizations

Capitalize the official names of organizations: "Janet Boonies is now executive director of the Maine Land Trust Association."

Special Events

Capitalize events when they are proper nouns, such as Family and Friends Weekend, Commencement, and Convocation, as well as the semester term used, e.g. Hampshire College celebrated Spring Commencement on May 16, 2021. The Hampshire College Commencement ceremony took place on May 16, 2021.

Scholarships

Upper case when using formal name (Harold F. Johnson Scholarships, the New England Telephone Scholars). Lower case when used informally (the Johnson scholars, the Johnson scholarship, the Noyes scholarships).

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School Names

Write out full official names of universities and colleges, e.g., "University of Washington, Seattle" and "Albany Medical College," not "Albany."

The other members of the Five College consortium should be written out as Amherst College Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

PLEASE NOTE: It is "University of Massachusetts Amherst" on all references. Not "UMass Amherst," "University of Massachusetts in Amherst," "University of Massachusetts at Amherst," or "University of Massachusetts, Amherst."

Telephone numbers

In college publications and on the website, telephone numbers are written with dots rather than dashes: 413.559.0000.

Time

Write time: 5 p.m.; 10:30 p.m., etc.

1-5 p.m., not 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

6:30 in the evening, not 6:30 p.m. in the evening. Use noon and midnight, not 12 a.m. or 12 p.m. (exceptions include only when calendaring technology may not allow it)

Titles

Hampshire does not use social titles. Example: "Lewis said..." not "Mr. Lewis said..."

Always address people by their last name in formal writing: "Chrisler said..." not "Jennifer said..."

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Titles of jobs: When formal title precedes proper name, capitalize (Chief Advancement Officer Jennifer Chrisler, President Ed Wingenbach). When title follows proper name, use lower case (Jennifer Chrisler, chief advancement officer, Ed Wingenbach, president).

When title alone is used, use lower case (the director of development, the director of student affairs) (The president gave a speech at commencement.)

Program titles: Capitalize all words in a title except conjunctions and prepositions of less than seven letters (Peace and World Security Studies, Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program).

Title of works: Generally, the titles of sizeable works are italicized, and shorter ones are put in quotes. Italicize names of books, television programs, magazines, movies, long musical compositions, albums/CDs, and titles of works of art. Plays, poems, articles, short stories, songs, essays, radio, and television show episodes appear in quotes. Do not underline.

Examples: I read *War and Peace* and *Newsweek* today. I watched *The War* by Ken Burns.

You should not italicize the names of television channels or radio stations, e.g. The documentary *Coded Bias* aired on PBS last weekend.

Exceptions: Web headlines, email subject lines, and some social media channels do not allow italicizing. You can substitute quotation marks for italics in these cases, e.g. the documentary “Coded Bias” aired on PBS last weekend.

Capitalization of Headlines and Page Titles

Use headline case for headings and page titles.

Foreign Language Words and Genus/Species Names

Words in foreign languages should be italicized, as should genus/species names.

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Miscellaneous Usage

Avoid "in the Valley": use "Western Massachusetts or Pioneer Valley" but only in the geographical sense; substitute "in the area" or "in the region."

When talking about places with accommodations for people with disabilities, use the term "accessible" rather than "disabled" or "handicapped." For example, refer to an "accessible" bathroom or parking space.

Do not use "firstly," "secondly," "thirdly," etc. Use "first," "second," and "third."

Ampersand: Ampersands are only to be used when there isn't enough space to spell out "and." The word "and" is always preferable to an ampersand.

PUNCTUATION**Bulleted List**

Use a period after bullet list that completes the opening stem sentence that introduces it. Don't use a period after bullet lists that are not complete sentences or do not complete the opening stem sentence. Don't use semicolons to end punctuation. Use either all full sentences in your bullet lists or all fragments.

Commas

Use serial commas after all members of a series (history, sociology, or biology; Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges). Use comma after name and before and after Jr. or Sr. (John Smith, Jr., is here), but not before II or III (John Smith III is gone).

Hyphens and En- and Em-Dashes

Hyphens: These are used to join words together, e.g., "world-class runner." The hyphen makes reading easier by demonstrating that "world-class" is a compound word used as an adjective describing the noun "runner." (Hampshire's exception: "Five College area.") More examples: disability-rights organization, ten-year career, 247-year-old house. Do not hyphenate adverb modifiers preceding nouns, as in "highly developed," "fully realized." When hyphenated adjectives are used as nouns, the hyphen is usually dropped. ("This is a short-term project," but "Do this in the short term.") Don't put a space on either side of a hyphen.

In general, the trend is to minimize the use of hyphens and to substitute solid or open compound words. Also keep in mind that when a hyphenated word has become commonplace through frequent use, a hyphen is no longer necessary (e.g. "filmmaker" and "nonprofit"). When in doubt on hyphenated words, check the dictionary.

En-dashes: When writing out inclusive numbers such as hours of operation, use an en-dash.

Example: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Em-dashes: Em-dashes are longer than en-dashes, twice as long as hyphens, and serve a different function. They actually do the opposite of what hyphens do; they set works apart and are used to create emphasis. ("This has been a challenging year for us—actually, a challenging several years.") Don't put a space on either side of a dash. Don't use dashes when you can't think of the proper punctuation; they are not substitutes for colons.

Example: "I believed—before moving to Boulder, CO, and meeting Anne Waldman—that I'd go into electrical engineering."

Ellipses

If you shorten someone's quote, signify this by using ellipses (three periods in a row).

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Example: Smith said, "I'm studying computer programming...with a great professor."

i.e. and e.g.

E.g. stands for *exempli gratia* and means "for example." I.e. is the abbreviation for *id est* and means "in other words." e.g. is used to introduce a few examples, not a complete list. Letters should be lowercase unless beginning a sentence, as seen above.

For e.g., use a period between the letters and follow with a comma to begin your list. Hampshire College alumni are leaders in their field (e.g., Ken Burns, Heather Boushey, Lupita Nyong'o).

Spaces

In all published matter or computer-generated correspondence, place one space only between sentences.

Quotation Marks

Commas and periods should appear inside quotation marks. For example: "It was," he said, "a good place to be." Exclamation points and question marks should be placed within quotation marks when they are part of the quoted matter; otherwise they should be placed outside. (For example: The woman cried, "The dog is running away!" Her husband actually responded, "It's no concern of mine!")

Colons and semicolons should be placed outside quotation marks.

Commonly Used Words and Phrases

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50th Anniversary (when referring to event)	intercampus	premedical
advisor	interdisciplinary	present-day
African-American (adj.)	interlibrary	problem solving (n.)
African American (n.)	Internet	problem-solving (adj.)
alums (to replace alumni/ae)	Learning Collaboratives (LCs)	RSVP or r.s.v.p.
alumni (adj.)	LinkedIn	(not R.S.V.P.)
BIPOC	listserv	self-consciousness
Black	livestream	self-knowledge
catalog	long-range (adj.)	small-scale
co-author	long-term (adj.)	short- and long-term
co-chair	Mount Holyoke College (not Mt. Holyoke)	TheHub
co-director	multidisciplinary	three- and four-year contracts
COVID-19	nationwide	TikTok
counselor	nonfiction	U.S. (adj., ie., U.S. government)
decision making (n.)	nonprofit	United States (n.)
decision-making (adj.)	nonviolent	Ultimate Frisbee
Devalue	non-Western	username
Div I, Div II, Div III, Div Free	ongoing	

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ebook	overall	West Coast
eCheck-in	online	western New England
email	part-time	England
extracurricular	phonathon	Western Massachusetts
filmmakers	postdoctoral	women's studies
filmmaking	postsecondary	webpage (not Web page)
first-come, first-served		website (not Web site)
first-year (adj.)		work-study
first year (noun)		YouTube
Five College, Inc.		
Five College consortium		
Five College cooperation		
Five College system		
full-time (adj.)		
fundraising		