

Salem State Style Guide [Effective December 2011]

Supporting Salem State's brand in all correspondence, publications and other communications is important in conveying what we are as an institution. Although many employees are confident writers, and have spent years honing their own writing and editing skills, it is important that everyone follow the same basic rules to achieve brand consistency across the college. The writing style for a research paper, for instance, is generally not the same as that used in the public domain. It is not a matter of right or wrong, but rather a matter of supporting Salem State's brand and identity. As language—and Salem State—are always changing, we will update this guide periodically to reflect those developments.

As a general rule, the college adheres to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMO) as its source guide; in some instances, however, we have made choices that supersede the CMO. When trying to follow a rule proves awkward or causes confusion, you can often solve the problem by simply re-writing the text in a different way. For any questions on style, grammar and punctuation not covered in this guide or in the CMO, please contact Margo W. R. Steiner at extension 7505.

Editorially yours,

Marketing and Communications

Quick Reference for Major Style Issues

- All bullets should be round. Do not use squares.
- All text copy should be flush left; do not center text.
- Unless referring to athletic contests, *do not* use the acronym SSU.
- Lower case 'university' and 'president' unless they are used as part of a title (Salem State University and President Patricia Maguire Meservey).
- Lower case people's titles when they are used after a person's name. Titles are capitalized when they appear before a person's name or in a list, ***unless there is a descriptor preceding the title (see below)***.

Correct: Patricia Maguire Meservey, president of Salem State, spoke to faculty yesterday.

Correct: Joseph Aiyeku, marketing professor, and Brewer Doran, dean of the Bertolon School of Business, drew up plans for a conference in April.

Correct: Marketing students enjoyed Professor Aiyeku's class.

Correct: Students enjoyed marketing professor Joseph Aiyeku's class.

Incorrect: Students enjoyed Marketing Professor Joseph Aiyeku's class.

Correct: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited President Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.

Correct: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited Salem State University president Patricia Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.*

*Although the above may seem incorrect, *The Chicago Manual of Style* states that, "When...titles are used in apposition to a name they are not part of the name and so are lowercased," as in the following example: French president François Mitterand.

If in doubt, change the sentence to read: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited President Patricia Meservey of Salem State University to speak at its annual meeting

Incorrect: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited Salem State University President Patricia Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.

- Titles at the close of correspondence should be capitalized and set on a line under the person's name:

Correct: Patricia Maguire Meservey
President

- The use of doctor and Dr.
In formal speech, medical doctors, psychologists, dentists, and veterinarians should be addressed as "doctor."

Example "Tell me, Doctor Ross, if you would recommend having Fido neutered before we go on vacation or after we return."

In written materials, place the title of "Dr." before the name of a person who is a doctor of medicine or psychology, doctor of dentistry, or doctor of veterinary medicine, and always write the word "doctor" in its abbreviated form ("Dr.") when it goes before the person's name.

Correct: Dr. George Ross

Incorrect: Doctor George Ross

In the academic environment, those holding the PhD, EdD or PsyD are more properly referred to as "professor" in formal speech.

Preferable: When I asked Professor Hansen for the syllabus, he said he would send it electronically.

Acceptable, but not preferred: When I asked Dr. Hansen for the syllabus, he said he would send it electronically.

In written materials, those holding academic doctorates should be referred to as follows:

Correct: James Smith PhD

Correct: Professor James Smith PhD (or EdD, and so on, depending on the degree)

Incorrect: Dr. James Smith

Incorrect: Dr. James Smith EdD

- Use only one space after a period.
- The word website is one word, and not capitalized. When used alone, Web is capitalized.
- When citing Web URLs, eliminate the www.
- Spell out numbers from zero to nine. Everything from 10 and above should be numerical.
- When writing whole dollar amounts, eliminate the period and double 00s (\$25).
- Write 'whole' hours without a colon and the '00' (7 pm). When using minutes, do include the colon and the portion of the hour (7:15 pm).
- The times of day (am and pm) are to be written in lowercase with no periods.
- When writing telephone numbers, use dots instead of dashes (978.542.6000).
- Email, ezine and e-newsletter are all lowercase (unless the first word in a sentence). In a series of three words, there is no comma before 'and'. In a series of four words or more, use a comma before 'and'.
- Write the seasons *without* initial caps (fall, spring, summer, winter).

Correct: The fall semester begins September 3, 2009.

Incorrect: The Spring catalog comes out in January.

- Dates and dates with times should always be expressed in the following order, although in some cases only some of the elements may be present: day, month, date, year, time.

Correct: Thursday, June 25, 2009, at 11 am

Overall Approach to Writing and Formatting

- Assume the reader is time starved, and write succinctly.
- Use the language of everyday speech.
- Spell check is not infallible. Please proofread everything you write, including emails.
- Use strong topic sentences, and limit each paragraph to one main idea.
- Do not use unnecessary words. If you can convey your message in fewer words, do so.
- For emails, PowerPoint presentations, pdfs, and when developing content for the university website, Arial in 10-point size is the *only* accepted font and size.

- Use only one space after periods and other forms of punctuation.
- The only logo accepted for general use is the following. All other university logos, including the one with the tagline *Educating you for life*, may only be used with permission of marketing and communications.
- When writing content for other correspondence, use Univers/11 pt; other approved fonts are Garamond and Perpetua. Arial must be used for the Web, emails and PowerPoints, and other situations where the use of Univers is impossible or impractical.
- Refrain from using exclamation points, all caps and bold text; if you must use an exclamation point, limit it to just one (!).
- Although text for print materials can be longer and more detailed than text for the Web, it is still wise not overwhelm the reader. Include only the most salient and interesting facts.
- Use first person plural (we, our, us) when writing about Salem State, as it makes the copy more conversational.
- Write in the present tense when discussing current matters, use the progressive tense to describe an ongoing matter and use the past tense to describe a completed matter.

Example: We guide students through complex mathematical formulae. (present)

Example: We are developing a new program in physics. (progressive)

Example: We secured a \$100,000 grant to fund this initiative. (past)

- Write primarily in the active voice, which means the subject of the sentence does something.

Example: Respected publications recognize our faculty members as leaders in student-centered education.

Not: Our faculty members are recognized by respected publications as leaders in student-centered education.

- Always write out the full month, unless it is used in a table, in which case an abbreviation is acceptable. Maintain consistency in headings with respect to abbreviation vs. complete spelling.

Correct: January (in text)

Correct: Jan or Jan. (in charts and tables)

Correct: Jan Mar

Incorrect: Jan March (shows inconsistency)

- When referring to a Salem State employee, use the full name (followed by their title in lowercase) the first time; thereafter, use just the last name.
- When writing about awards and honors, use lowercase when they are generic and uppercase when they are preceded by the name of the specific organization or group providing them. Always explain the context of the award to help those not familiar with it.

Correct: Peter Smith received the educator of the year award, which is annually presented to the best five best teachers in Massachusetts.

Incorrect: Peter Smith received the Educator of the Year Award.

Correct: Peter Smith received the Friends of the School of Education Educator of the Year Award.

- Avoid unsupported superlatives.

Example: Salem State is one of the largest state universities in Massachusetts.

Not: Salem State is the largest, and the best, state university in Massachusetts.

- Try not to begin or end sentences with prepositions.
- Dates and dates with times should always be expressed in the following order: day, month, date, year, time.

Correct: Thursday, June 25, 2009, at 11 am

Salem State-specific Items (and words that are frequently used in our brochures and on the Web)

- Salem State University should always be spelled out in a first reference; succeeding references may use the acronym SSU.

Note: This does not apply to more formal correspondence, where SSU is never acceptable.

- In a first mention of Salem State University, use its full name. Thereafter, it may be referred to as either Salem State or the university (lowercase).
- Theatre at Salem State is spelled 'theatre' when referring to the theatre department or the Mainstage Theatre. When talking about theater in general, it is spelled *theater*.
- Lowercase *president* and all other position designations unless they are used as part of a title, appear under the person's name at the close of a letter, or are part of a list. **Exception: If a descriptor precedes the title before a person's name, the title is not capitalized.**

Correct: The vice chancellor introduced President Patricia Maguire Meservey.

Correct: The vice chancellor introduced Salem State president Patricia Maguire Meservey. (Because there is a descriptor, Salem State, in front of the title, the title is not capitalized.)

Correct: Representing the administration were: Robert Gates, secretary of defense; Hillary Clinton, secretary of state, and Ken Salazar, secretary of the interior.

Correct: When Mayor Kimberley Driscoll spoke to students, she mentioned her education at Salem State.

Correct: When Salem mayor Kimberly Driscoll spoke to students, she mentioned her education at Salem State. (Because there is a descriptor, Salem, in front of the title, the title is not capitalized.)

- Named campus buildings are capitalized. Generic campus buildings are not (see campus buildings).

Correct: All seminars will take place in Meier Hall.

Correct: Workshops will be held in the library.

- The names of departments are not capitalized.

Correct: The biology department will hold an open house on April 21.

- The names of centers, schools and colleges ARE capitalized.

Example: College of Arts and Sciences

Example: Center for International Education

Example: School of Nursing

Example: School of Continuing Education and Professional Development

- The names of administrative offices are not capitalized. The words 'office' or 'office of' are not used with the area name unless not using them makes the intent unclear.

Correct: Residence life is located on Central Campus.

Correct: Parking stickers are available in public safety.

Correct: Billing questions should be directed to the bursar's office.

Correct: Jane was looking for the financial aid office. (Jane was looking for financial aid would be unclear: Is she looking for financial assistance or is she looking for the office that provides it?)

- *In-state, out-of-state and on-campus*

- When used as adjectives, the above are hyphenated.

Example: She lived in Massachusetts and paid in-state tuition rates.

Example: Applications for on-campus parking decals are available at public safety.

- When not used as adjectives, do not hyphenate them.

Example: Because she lived in state, Margaret found her tuition bills much lower.

Example: Living on campus provided him numerous opportunities for socializing.

- If the word grade-point average is written out, it should have a hyphen between the first two words. If it is used as an abbreviation, it should be written GPA. In written materials going to non-academics (parents, donors, others), you should use the full word first and GPA subsequently.

Correct: Students are expected to maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher. Failure to maintain this minimum GPA will be cause for academic probation.

Web-Specific Writing and Formatting

- Web images should be 72 dpi, and either 150 x 200 pixels or 100 x 150 pixels. Web photos should *never* exceed 250 pixels.
- For the Web, no page should contain more than 500-550 words
- Tip: Before adding Web content, run entries through NotePad to remove hidden coding that might affect the final product.
- Since Salem State's website does not accept "curly quotes," please use "straight quotes" when preparing documents for the Web in MS Word.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Use full words, as opposed to abbreviations, whenever possible.
- Do not use the abbreviations *e.g.* or *i.e.* Instead, use words such as *namely*, *including* or *such as*.

Correct: Bones from a variety of small animals, including squirrels, pigeons and muskrats, were found in the doctor's cabinet.

Incorrect: Bones from a variety of small animals, e.g., squirrels, pigeons and muskrats, were found in the doctor's cabinet.

- Try not to use the abbreviation *etc.* Instead, use phrasing such as *and so on* or *among other things*.

Correct: The session included talks on aging, nutrition, vitamin supplements, among other topics.

Incorrect: The session included talks on aging, nutrition, vitamin supplements, etc.

- The word ZIP in ZIP code should always be capitalized, as it's an acronym for Zone Improvement Plan.
- Two-letter state abbreviations (MA, CA, CT, WA, and so on) are to be used only when writing an address. In all other cases, spell out the state's full name in text. When referring to the country's capital, you may use DC (with no periods) instead of District of Columbia.
- Salem State University should always be spelled out in a first reference; succeeding references may use the acronym SSU.

Note: This does not apply to more formal correspondence, where SSU is never acceptable.

- Do not use periods in abbreviated place names. The only exception is U.S., which should always have periods to clearly distinguish it from *US* magazine or the word *us*.

Correct: The international student association traveled to Washington, DC

Incorrect: The international student association traveled to Washington, D.C.

Correct: After her semester in Italy, Sarah looked forward to returning to the U.S.

Incorrect: After her semester in Italy, Sarah looked forward to returning to the US.

Academic Titles

- Lower case people's titles when they are used after a person's name. Titles are capitalized when they appear before a person's name or in a list, ***unless there is a descriptor preceding the title (see below)***.

Correct: Patricia Maguire Meservey, president of Salem State, spoke to faculty yesterday.

Correct: Joseph Aiyeku, marketing professor, and Brewer Doran, dean of the Bertolon School of Business, drew up plans for a conference in April.

Correct: Marketing students enjoyed Professor Aiyeku's class.

Correct: Students enjoyed marketing professor Joseph Aiyeku's class.

Incorrect: Students enjoyed Marketing Professor Joseph Aiyeku's class.

Correct: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited President Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.

Correct: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited Salem State University president Patricia Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.*

*Although the above may seem incorrect, *The Chicago Manual of Style* states that, "When...titles are used in apposition to a name they are not part of the name and so are lowercased," as in the following example: French president François Mitterrand.

If in doubt, change the sentence to read: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited President Patricia Meservey of Salem State University to speak at its annual meeting

Incorrect: The North Shore Chamber of Commerce invited Salem State University President Patricia Meservey to speak at its annual meeting.

- Titles at the close of correspondence should be capitalized and set on a line under the person's name:

-

Correct: Patricia Maguire Meservey
President

- The use of doctor and Dr.
In formal speech, medical doctors, psychologists, dentists, and veterinarians should be addressed as "doctor."

Example "Tell me, Doctor Ross, if you would recommend having Fido neutered before we go on vacation or after we return."

- In written materials, place the title of "Dr." before the name of a person who is a doctor of medicine or psychology, doctor of dentistry, or doctor of veterinary medicine, and always write the word "doctor" in its abbreviated form ("Dr.") when it goes before the person's name.

Correct: Dr. George Ross

Incorrect: Doctor George Ross

- In the academic environment, those holding the PhD, EdD or PsyD are more properly referred to as "professor" in formal speech.

Preferable: When I asked Professor Hansen for the syllabus, he said he would send it electronically.

Acceptable, but not preferred: When I asked Dr. Hansen for the syllabus, he said he would send it electronically.

- In written materials, those holding academic doctorates should be referred to as follows:

Correct: James Smith PhD

Correct: Professor James Smith PhD (or EdD, and so on, depending on the degree)

Incorrect: Dr. James Smith

Incorrect: Dr. James Smith EdD

Acronyms

Acronyms for university organizations and departments may be employed only after the full name of the organization (with its acronym following in parentheses) has been stated.

Correct:	First use:	Salem State University Student Government Association (SGA)
	Subsequent uses:	The SGA will hold its next meeting in March.
	First use:	Salem State University Student Academic Support Services (SASS)
	Subsequent uses:	SASS offers a number of services to students in need of assistance . . .

Alumni

- At Salem State, we use the term alumni to refer to a group of more than one male and female graduate. The rules for citing graduates in other permutations are as follows:
 - A single female graduate is an alumna.
 - A single male graduate is an alumnus.
 - A group of female graduates are alumnae.
 - A group of male graduates are alumni.
 - A mixed group of graduates are alumni.
 - When referring to a graduate whose gender is not known, you may use alumna/nus.

Correct: The award will be given to an alumna/nus of the university. (You may also write this as follows: The award will be given to an alumna or alumnus of the university.)

- Do not capitalize the 'a' in alumni if it's not part of an official title:

Correct: The Salem State Alumni Board meets quarterly.

Correct: The alumni board meets quarterly.

Bulleted lists

- Do not use commas or periods after items in bulleted lists unless they are full sentences.
- Always use round bullets. Never use square or other bullet styles.

Campus buildings

- Named campus buildings are capitalized. Generic campus buildings are not.

Correct: The president's office is in Meier Hall.

- Correct: The library hosted a seminar on using reference works.
- Correct: Students requiring assistance with financial aid should go to the administration building.
- Correct: The accounting and finance department is located in the Bertolon School of Business.
- Correct: The bookstore is located on Salem State's Central Campus.
- Incorrect: The Library hosted a seminar on using reference works.
- Incorrect: Students requiring assistance with financial aid should go to the Administration Building.
- Incorrect: The event is being hosted in the Cafeteria.

Capitalization

- See campus buildings (above) for the proper capitalization of building names.
- Department names are not capitalized.

Correct: Mary Jones, of the art department, exhibited her latest work at the Winfisky Gallery.

Incorrect: Mary Jones, of the Art Department, exhibited her latest work at the Winfisky Gallery.

Correct: She taught biology and political science.

Incorrect: She taught Biology and Political Science.

- Named schools, and those entities beginning with "School of," "College of" and "Center of/for" should be uppercase. Centers should also be uppercase, along with Continuing Education. The business school, when used generically, should be lowercase.

Correct: The largest numbers of students are enrolled in the Bertolon School of Business.

Correct: Mirembe Okuma was on the faculty of the business school.

Correct: The School of Education (School of Nursing/School of Human Services/School of Arts and Sciences) prepares future educators.

Correct: The Center for International Education is hosting students from China.

- All offices should be lowercase.

- Correct: She submitted her application for hall proctor to residence life.
- Correct: Everyone in the bursar's office stayed late to process payments.
- Correct: She interned for a semester in multicultural affairs.
- Incorrect: Parking stickers were available the first week of second semester in Public Safety.
- Incorrect: The Alumni Affairs Office is located on South Campus.

- The only exceptions are languages (French, Spanish, Arabic, and so on)

Example: The French department often showed films in their original language.

- Do not capitalize the words *commencement* or *convocation* unless they are used to refer to a specific event.

Correct: In April, seniors began looking forward to commencement.

Correct: Salem State Commencement 2010 was held outdoors.

- Capitalize a proper noun.

Example: Golden Gate Bridge

- Capitalize a person's title when it precedes the name. Do not capitalize when the title acts as a description following the name, or the person's name and department are part of a list. Do not capitalize the title when a descriptor precedes it before the name.

Correct: Professor Smith

Correct: David Smith, an economics professor, will address us at noon.

Correct: The committee includes: Anne Davidson, professor of art; James Dylan, dean of the School of Social Services; Jamal Jabbar, chair of the botany department; and Winifred Axelrod, provost and vice president.

Correct: The committee includes: art professor Anne Davidson; Dean of the School of Social Services James Dylan; Jamal Jabbar, chair of the botany department; and Winifred Axelrod, provost and vice president.

- Capitalize a person's title and put it on the line under his/her name in an address or as part of a signature.

Example: Sincerely,

Margaret Haines
Chairperson

- Lower case *university* and *president* unless they are used as part of a title

Correct: Salem State University

Correct: President Patricia Maguire Meservey

Correct: The university has a long history of training teachers.

Incorrect: The University is committed to civic engagement.

Correct: At her last open meeting, the president discussed upcoming commencement activities.

Incorrect: At her last open meeting, the President discussed upcoming commencement activities.

- Capitalize the titles of high-ranking government officials when used with or before their names. Do not capitalize the civil title if it is used instead of the name.

Example: The president will address Congress.

Example: All senators are expected to attend.

Example: The governors, lieutenant governors and attorneys general called for a special task force.

Example: Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Poppins, Attorney General Dalloway, and Senator Twain will attend.

- Capitalize points of the compass only when they refer to specific regions.

Example: We are very involved with businesses on the North Shore.

Example: Numerous retirees choose to live in the Southwest because of the climate.

Example: Go south three blocks and then turn left.

Example: We live in the southeast section of town.

- Always capitalize the first and last words of titles of works (books, magazine articles, songs, regardless of their parts of speech. Capitalize other words within titles, including the short verb forms *is*, *are* and *be*.

Exception: **Do not** capitalize little words within titles such as articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, yet, for, or, nor) or prepositions, regardless of their length.

Examples: *The Day of the Jackal*
 What Color Is Your Parachute?
 A Tale of Two Cities

- Capitalize the first word of a quote within a sentence.

Example: I like the Robert Frost poem that goes, “My little horse must think it queer, to stop without a farmhouse near.”

- Capitalize ‘federal,’ ‘state’ and ‘city’ when used as part of an official agency name or in government documents where these terms represent an official name. In other words, if you are talking about the official powers of the city or state (the authorities who can sign contracts and pass laws) or the exact geographical entity, use uppercase. If they are being used as general terms, use lowercase letters.

Examples: The state has evidence to the contrary.
 That is a federal offense.
 The Massachusetts State Board of Equalization collects sales taxes.
 We will visit three states during our summer vacation.
 The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been subject to much scrutiny and criticism lately.
 Her business must comply with all county, state and federal laws.
 The City of Salem regularly auctions used vehicles and equipment.
 I live in the city of Salem.
 Dave works for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
 Dave works for the commonwealth.

- The initial ‘I’ in Internet is capitalized.
- Write website as one word, lowercased. When used without the word *site*, capitalize Web.
- Email, ezine and newsletter are all lowercase (unless the first word in a sentence).
- Do not capitalize names of seasons. Do not capitalize the seasons when used with the word *semester* unless it is part of a header, used at the beginning of a sentence or as part of a title.

Example: I love autumn colors and spring flowers.

Example: The course catalog for fall semester comes out next week.

Example: The *Fall Semester Course Catalog* was widely distributed.

- Capitalize words derived from proper nouns.

Example: I must take English and math.
(English is capitalized because it comes from the proper noun England.)

- Capitalize the names of specific course titles. Do not put them in quote marks.

Correct: I must take World Civilization I and Algebra 2.

Incorrect: I must take "World Civilization I" and "Algebra 2."

- Do not capitalize the names of subject areas, unless they are languages (French, Spanish, English, and so on) or include proper names.

Example: I took a biology course last semester, and will take a course in Spanish history in the spring.

- After a phrase ending with a colon, **do not** capitalize the first word if it begins a list.

Example: These are my favorite foods: chocolate cake, spaghetti and artichokes.

- **Do not** capitalize when only one sentence follows a sentence ending with a colon.

Example: I love sports: lacrosse really gives me a terrific workout.

- **Do** capitalize when two or more sentences follow a sentence ending with a colon.

Example: I love sports: Lacrosse is my favorite. Curling and soccer are a close second.

- In invitations, all letters in *RSVP* should be capitalized. Do not use periods between the letters.

- When referring to degrees in full within a sentence, do not capitalize them.

Correct: Mary earned her master's degree at Salem State.

Incorrect: After completing his Bachelor's degree, Adegoke considered pursuing a Master's degree in psychological counseling.

- The names of organizations, clubs and departments should be capitalized if they are preceded by Salem State University. Subsequently (in the same document), they are to be lowercased if they stand alone.

Correct: First use: The Salem State University Student Government Association will hold elections in May.

 Subsequent uses: The student government association will hold its next meeting on March 13.

 First use: Salem State University Student Academic Support Services (SASS)

 Subsequent uses: Student academic support services offers a number of services to students in need of assistance . . .

Collective nouns

Nouns that refer to groups, such as faculty, committee, board (of trustees), and staff, can often cause trouble when trying to decide whether they take a singular or plural verb.

- When the collective noun shows the group acting as one, treat it as singular and use the singular verb.

 Example: The geology faculty meets with the dean at 9 am tomorrow. (All of the faculty, acting as a unit, will attend the meeting.)

- When the collective noun shows members of the group acting as individuals, treat it as plural and use the plural verb form.

 Example: The committee are divided on the issue. (Members of the committee are acting as individuals, not as a unit; in other words, they don't agree)

- Since collective nouns can often be difficult, it is sometimes easier to restructure the sentence by inserting the word *members* or *representatives* or similar words, as in the following examples:

 Example: Committee members are divided on the issue.

 Example: Staff members were asked to work different shifts throughout the conference.

- Data is a plural noun and takes a plural verb.

Commonly misspelled words

The following are sometimes written incorrectly. The correct spellings are below:

- Backup (noun); back up (verb)
- Catalog
- Check-in (noun and adjective)
- College wide (The memorandum was distributed college wide.)
- Course work
- Email (one word, lowercased unless it begins a sentence or is used in a list, as here)
- E-newsletter
- Fieldwork (noun)
- Firsthand (adjective and adverb)
- Flow sheet (noun)
- Follow up (verb); follow-up (adjective and noun)
- Fundraising, fundraiser
- Hard-cover (adjective)
- Health care (except when used as an adjective, where it is hyphenated)
 - a. Health care is a serious concern.
 - b. Health-care initiatives are increasingly controversial.
- Internet (capitalized)
- Interrelationships (noun)
- Lay out (verb); layout (noun)
- Lifelong (adjective)
- Mail room
- Mark up (verb); markup (noun)
- Multi-cultural
- Multidisciplinary
- Nationwide
- Nonprofit (never hyphenated, even when used as an adjective; preferred over not-for-profit)
- On campus (noun; location); on-campus (adjective)
- Paper work (noun)
- Placeholder (noun)
- Pro-active (adjective)
- RSVP
- View book
- Voice mail
- Web (when used alone, Web is capitalized); website; webpage
- Week-long (adjective)
- Work place (except when used as an adjective, where it is hyphenated)
 - a. Our work place has strict non-smoking rules.
 - b. Work-place hazards should be identified and removed.
- Worldwide (should not be used when referring to the Web, as in the *Worldwide Web*)
- Write-up (noun); write up (verb)
- ZIP code (ZIP should always be all caps)

Dates

- Express dates with the month written out. Do not use *th* or *st* or *rd*.

Example: August 21, 2009

Not: August 21st, 2009

Not: 08.21.09

Not: 21.08.09

- Full dates (month, day, year), when used in a sentence, are to be followed by a comma. If only the month and year are used, a comma is not necessary.

Correct: On May 14, 2009, Salem State will hold its undergraduate commencement ceremonies.

Incorrect: On May 14, 2009 Salem State will hold undergraduate commencement ceremonies.

Correct: In March 2011

- In dates that encompass a time span, such as March 20–24, 2011, there should be no space before or after the en dash.

Formatting

- All printed materials are to be flush left. Only in very exceptional circumstances can printed materials be centered. Please check with design services for individual guidelines.
- Numbered pages are to display each page number at bottom right.
- Business letters of two pages need no number on the second page. If longer than two pages, page numbers should be located at bottom right, as above.

Grammar/Punctuation—General (see specific rules of punctuation under ‘Punctuation)

- **There is only one space after a period**, colon, question mark, exclamation point, semicolons, and so on. **Never** use two spaces.
 - Note: Using two spaces after periods and colons was a convention developed for typewriters. Now that we use computer programs with proportional fonts, the two-space rule is no longer necessary.
- Use a semicolon to set off a series within a series

Correct: Meetings were held in Salem, Massachusetts; Austin, Texas; and Washington, DC

- Do not link *-ly* adverbs with a hyphen when they are part of a compound modifier

Correct: He has extensive knowledge of publicly traded companies.

Incorrect: He has extensive knowledge of publicly-traded companies.

- Use *em* dashes (—) sparingly to indicate emphasis, an interruption or an abrupt change in thought. They may also be used when a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas. **Do not** put a space on either side of the em dash. The em dash is created by holding down the control, alt and hyphen keys (from the numerical keypad) simultaneously.

Correct: We have the key qualifications—talent, strength and resources—to make this research project a success.

Correct: You are the friend—the only friend—who has offered to help me.

- Use *en* dashes (–) to indicate inclusive dates and numbers (including page ranges); the en dash means *through*. *Do not* put a space on either side of the en dash. The en dash is created by holding down the control key and the hyphen key from the numerical keypad.

Correct: March 20–22, 2007

- However, use a hyphen to mark a span of month

Correct: June–August 2007

- A comma is not needed after a year at the beginning of a sentence unless the year is preceded by a month and day.

Correct: In 2005 he was appointed secretary.

Correct: On March 1, 2005, he was appointed secretary.

- Always put a comma before *including* when it introduces a list.

Correct: The school offered a variety of programs, including English, composition and creative writing.

- Do not put a comma before *such as* or *as well as* unless necessary for clarification.

Correct: In challenging academic programs such as honors physics and chemistry, we provide extensive support.

Incorrect: In challenging academic programs, such as honors physics and chemistry, we provide extensive academic support.

- When you bold a word or phrase, do not bold the punctuation that follows it unless it is part of a header.

Correct: Salem State was honored to have **President Obama**, who was recently elected president, lead the ceremony.

Incorrect: Salem State was honored to have **President Obama**, who was recently elected president, lead the ceremony.

Numbers

- Unless they're in a cluster (Peter was younger than his friends, who were 6, 8 and 10.), spell out numbers from zero to nine (David bought six apples, three bananas and 10 pears.). Everything from 10 and above should be numerical.
- Very large numbers, however, needn't be spelled out.
Example: The sun is nearly 4.5 million miles from earth.
- Never begin a sentence with a numeral.
Correct: Eleven players were on the field.
Incorrect: 11 players were on the field.
- The trend now is *not* to use a comma in four-digit whole numbers.
Example: Over 4500 contenders showed up for the third season of *American Idol*.
- Do not use 'th' or 'rd' with numbers. Write out instead.
Correct: The pleasure of your company is requested on June 3, 2009.
The pleasure of your company is requested on June third, 2009,
Incorrect: The pleasure of your company is requested on June 3rd, 2009.
- When writing whole dollar amounts, eliminate the colon and double 00s.
Correct: For \$25, donors received a free keychain.
Incorrect: For \$25.00, donors received a free keychain.

Parts of Speech

Compound modifiers

- As much as possible, try to avoid hyphenating compound modifiers. Instances in which they should be used are the following:
 - When two or more adjectives come before a noun and act as a single idea
Example: He was a friendly-looking man.
 - When adverbs other than *-ly* adverbs are used in front of a noun
Example: He got a much-needed haircut yesterday.
- Do not use hyphens when the combination of words is used after the noun.
Example: The man was friendly looking.
Example: His haircut was much needed.

That/Which/Who

- *Who* refers to people, whereas *that* and *which* refer to groups or things.

Example: The student who received the highest grade lives in Bowditch Hall.

- *That* introduces essential clauses:

Example: My professor doesn't trust editorials that claim global warming doesn't exist.

- *Which* introduces non-essential clauses; these are always set off by commas.

Example: Tuesday's editorial, which claimed global warming is a figment of people's imaginations, angered many.

Photo Captions

When identifying people in captions, use this format:

- From left: John Smith, Mary Lyons, Sonia Diaz
- For more than one row, identify people in the first row as above. For all succeeding rows, you may leave out 'from left,' as that is understood. Use a semi-colon to separate rows. All rows after the first are lower cased (First row, from left: Jim Glynn, Dustin Pedroia, Jason Varitek; second row: Coco Crisp, Tim Wakefield, Adam Viniateri.).
- Captions are to be set in Roman type unless the rules for italicizing override this format.

Punctuation

Apostrophes

- When writing about decades, use an apostrophe before the decades if they're not preceded by the century.

Example: In 1968, the Vietnam War was in full swing.

Example: In the '70s, the United States was still heavily involved in Vietnam.

- When expressing a decade as a plural noun, do not use an apostrophe.

Example: The 1950s were a wonderful time in which to grow up.

- When referring to plurals of words that end in *s*, add *es* at the end.

Example: The red car belonged to the Joneses.

- When a noun ending in s shows possession, use a simple apostrophe after the s to show ownership.

Example: The Edwards' daughters were studying at prestigious universities.

Colons

- When the material introduced by a colon is more than one sentence, or is a formal statement or a quotation, it should begin with a capital letter. In all other cases, it should begin with a lower case letter.

Example: I want to make this perfectly clear: Late papers will not be accepted.
(formal statement)

Example: Professor Allen liked to use guest speakers: He felt they added a great deal to the class. It also gave him a break from preparing lectures every week. (two or more sentences following colon)

Example: Professor Allen liked to use guest speakers: he felt they added a great deal to the class. (only one sentence following colon)

- Colons should be used after a complete sentence to introduce a list of items

Example: She was looking for an intern capable of doing the following: entering data, analyzing information, writing well, and interfacing well with the public.

- Colons should be used following the salutation in business correspondence, even if using only a first name.

Examples: Dear Mr. Crostada:
Dear Evelyn:

Commas

- Three-word comma rule
 - The college adheres to the three-word (Oxford) comma rule, which places a comma before the *and* in a series of four or more words (except in cases of possible ambiguity, which would necessitate it being placed before the 'and' in a series of three. (Because "To my parents, Ayn Rand and God" doesn't convey the intended meaning, in this case there should be a comma before the 'and,' although there are only three items.)

Correct: David planned to take classes in French, marketing, sociology, and business law during the fall semester.

Alyssa packed her laptop, two notebooks and her cell phone before leaving for the library.

Incorrect: Alyssa packed her laptop, two notebooks, and her cell phone before leaving for the library.

- Use a comma when it follows a date in the body of a sentence.

Example: On January 12, 2008, Jim Glynn was signed by the Red Sox's farm team.

- Use a comma after both the city and the state when they are used in the body of a sentence.

Example: He'll report to Tampa, Florida, for spring training.

- **Do not** set off the abbreviations Jr. and Sr. with commas.

Correct: Martin Luther King Jr. had an enormous impact on civil rights.

Incorrect: Martin Luther King, Jr. studied in Boston as a young man.

- When the context calls for a comma following quoted material, the comma is placed inside the end quotation mark. The same holds true for periods. The standard rule in American punctuation is that periods go inside quotation marks, as do most commas, even if the punctuation is not part of the quote. The only exception is when quotation marks are put around a letter or number.

Example: When Sarah said, "Feel free to use our pool," she meant it.

Example: Asahi received three "B's" and an "A".

Dashes and Hyphens

The em dash is the longest, the en dash is half as long as the em dash and the hyphen is the shortest of the dashes.

Em dash (—)

- Use *em* dashes sparingly to indicate emphasis, an interruption or an abrupt change in thought. They may also be used when a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas. **Do not** put a space on either side of the em dash. In Windows, the em dash is created by holding down Alt and Ctrl keys, then the minus key on the numeric keypad.

Correct: We have the key qualifications—talent, strength and resources—to make this research project a success.

Correct: You are the friend—the only friend—who has offered to help me.

Incorrect: You are the friend — the only friend — who has offered to help me.

En dash (–)

- Use en dashes to indicate **inclusive**, continuing numbers such as page ranges, dates and times; think of the en dash as meaning 'through.' **Do not** put a space on either side of the en dash. In Windows, you can create an en dash by holding down the control key, and hitting the *minus* key on the numeric keypad.

Example: March 20–22, 2007

Example: Please read pages 37–49 before tomorrow’s class.

- Use an en dash in place of a hyphen when combining open compounds.

Example: The family never missed the Yale–Harvard football game.

Hyphen (-)

- Use a hyphen to separate numbers that are **not inclusive**, such as social security numbers. **Do not** put a space on either side of the hyphen.

Example: His social security number is 357-461-7743.

- Use a hyphen to mark a span of months. **Do not** put a space on either side of the hyphen. Alternatively, you may use the words *from* and *to* or *between* and *and*.

Example: June-August 2007

Example: He studied abroad between 1997 and 2001.

- Hyphenate all compound number from *twenty-one through ninety-nine*.
- Hyphenate spelled-out fractions.

Italics

- Italicize foreign words

Example: He loved speeding along the *autobahn* in Germany.

- When foreign words appear in the plural, the *s* at the end is not italicized.

Example: Germany’s *autobahns* frightened him.

- Italicize the titles of books, plays, newspapers, paintings, drawings, statues, and works of art.
- Musical compositions vary; please check *The Chicago Manual of Style* for specifics.
- Ongoing television shows are italicized. Individual episodes are placed in quotes.

Example: *Law and Order* is one of my favorite shows.

Example: The *Law and Order* episode, “Deadly Gain,” was one of my favorites.

- Articles, essays, chapter titles, some works of art, songs, and so on are plain text and enclosed in “ ”.

Example: Thomas Friedman's article, "Why We're Failing in Iraq," appeared in the *New York Times* on Saturday.

Periods

- Use only one space after periods and colons.
- Afternoon and evening times are to be cited as am and pm (no periods and always lower case), except when used in charts or tables, in which case they may be capitalized.
- When writing telephone numbers, use dots instead of dashes (978.542.6000).
- In most instances, American style calls for the inclusion of the period inside the quotation marks at the end of a sentence.

Example: At the conclusion of her speech, she noted that, "Each of us has the power to succeed."

See comma/quote rule (under Commas)

- When listing academic degrees, the trend now is to eliminate the periods.

Example: Derek Faust, BA, MS, PhD

- Do not use periods in abbreviated place names. The only exception is U.S., which should always have periods to clearly distinguish it from *US* magazine or the word *us*.

Correct: The international student association traveled to Washington, DC

Incorrect: The international student association traveled to Washington, D.C.

Correct: After her semester in Italy, Sarah looked forward to returning to the U.S.

Incorrect: After her semester in Italy, Sarah looked forward to returning to the US.

Semicolons

- A semicolon is used between two parts of a sentence when they're not connected by a conjunction.

Example: The signage for the old residence hall was removed; in its place, a new sign was installed.

- When items in a series are long and complex or involve internal punctuation, they should be separated by semicolons for purposes of clarity.

Example: The scores from the tournament were as follows: Salem State 9; Wesleyan 3; Westfield State 4; Bowdoin 7; Mass Maritime 7.

- A semicolon should be placed outside quotation marks or parentheses

Example: Professor Albert assumed everyone had read “On Living Well”; it was a critical part of the class discussion.

Example: The meeting was scheduled for Friday at 10 am (most felt that was the better time); but on the appointed day, only three showed up.

Symbols

Percentage

- In humanistic copy, always use percent as a word.

Example: Bill’s budget decreased by 40 percent.

- In scientific and statistical copy, such as tables and charts, use the symbol % to represent percentages.

Example: Fewer than 23% of the cultures tested yielded positive results.

- Use no space between the number and the % symbol.

Example: 45%

Ampersand versus the word *and*

- The ampersand (&) is considered variously as punctuation and graphic element, and should **not** be used in body text.
- Avoid ampersands unless they’re part of a company name, logo or common abbreviation.

Example: R&D (research and development)

Example: AT&T (company name)

Example: Rocks & Ropes (logo for climbing school)

Telephone numbers

Telephone and fax numbers

- Where just a phone number is given, there’s no need to write *phone* before it.

Correct: 978.542.6000

Incorrect: Phone: 978.542.6000

- Where both a phone and fax number are given, use the appropriate word before each.

Example: Phone: 978.542.6000 Fax: 978.542.7525

- Express extensions with the abbreviation ‘ext.’

Example: You may reach Jeff at 978.542.6749 ext. 542.

Time

- Afternoon and evening times are to be cited as am and pm (no periods and always lowercase).
- 'Whole' hours are to be listed with no colons and no 00s (7 pm). When using minutes, the colon and portion of the hour are to be included (7:15 pm).

Titles of Works

- The titles of books, plays, newspapers, paintings, drawings, statues, television series, and works of art are to be set in italics.
- Musical compositions vary; please check *The Chicago Manual of Style* for specifics.
- Articles, essays, chapter titles, individual television episodes, some works of art, songs, and so on are plain text and enclosed in " ".

Example: Thomas Friedman's article, "Why We're Failing in Iraq," appeared in the *New York Times* on Saturday.