

Style Guide

To establish consistency and retain quality in the printed materials representing Salisbury University, the Public Relations and Publications offices use *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*, with a few exceptions spelled out in the following guide. Please refer to this guide if you have any style questions or do not understand edits that have been made to your copy. All publications being distributed off campus must adhere to this style. (*Updated June 2020*)

Alphabetical Guide to Preferred Style, Spelling and Usage

A

a, an Use “a” before consonant sounds, “an” before vowel sounds. Note that use is determined according to the following word’s beginning sound, not first letter used.

Right: I am writing a historical novel.

Right: She has a master’s degree.

Right: They have an \$8 million budget.

Right: He has an M.A.

academic degrees Capitalize formal names of academic degrees (refer to Webster’s dictionary for official degree titles and abbreviations). The area in which the degree is held remains lowercase, with the exception of proper nouns. Set abbreviated degrees with no space around periods. Abbreviated certifications do not need periods (CPA, FNP, etc.).

Formal degrees awarded by SU are as follows:

B.A. - Bachelor of Arts (in art, English, psychology, philosophy, economics, etc.)

B.A.S.W. - Bachelor of Arts in Social Work

B.F.A. - Bachelor of Fine Arts (in art)

B.S. - Bachelor of Science (in accounting, biology, mathematics, nursing, etc.)

D.N.P. - Doctor of Nursing Practice

Ed.D. - Doctor of Education

M.A. - Master of Arts (in English, psychology)

M.A.T. - Master of Arts in Teaching

M.B.A. - Master of Business Administration

M.Ed. - Master of Education (in education, public school administration)

M.S. - Master of Science (in nursing)

M.S.M.E. - Master of Science in Mathematics Education

M.S.W. - Master of Social Work

Right: She earned a Bachelor of Science in mathematics.

Right: He holds a Bachelor of Arts in English.

When referring to degrees in general, lowercase the first letter of the degree and use “s.”

Right: Seventy people hold master’s degrees.

Right: They all had doctoral degrees in engineering.

Right: He earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics.

The word “degree” should not follow a degree abbreviation or formal title.

Wrong: He is working toward his Bachelor of Arts degree.

Right: She has a Bachelor of Arts.

academic departments/offices Academic areas are referred to as departments; administrative areas are referred to as offices. There are three exceptions to this rule: Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, which may be shortened to the Athletics Department; the Department of Horticulture, or Horticulture Department; and the Department of Information Technology, or Information Technology Department.

Capitalize the name of the department and the words “department,” “office” and “school” only when they appear in the form of the official divisional names such as “School of Education,” “Department of Social Work,” “Guerrieri University Center.”

Right: The English Department.

Right: The Publications Office.

Right: The University consists of four academic schools and two colleges, one of which is the Richard A. Henson School of Science and Technology.

Right: The Accounting Department is in the School of Business. The department is housed in Holloway Hall.

Right: The Publications and Public Relations offices are across from one another. I need to see someone in the Public Relations Office.

Alma Mater Capitalize Alma Mater when referring to Salisbury University; lower otherwise.

Alumni Identify past and current students by their class years with an apostrophe before the year. Use the word alumni when referring to a group of both genders. Use alumnus (alumni in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school; use alumna (alumnae in the plural) for similar references to a woman.

Alumni Association Capitalize all references to SU's Association.

and Spell out. Don't use the ampersand (&) except in company names as specified (Johnson & Johnson).

B

between, among Use between to show relationship between two objects; use among when more than two objects are involved.

board (of directors/of trustees) Lowercase in all instances except in reference to the USM Board of Regents.

Board of Regents/University System of Maryland Capitalize Board of Regents and Regent as a title before a name. Use caps on second reference to the Board. Capitalize University System of Maryland and capitalize System in second reference.

buildings Use the official name of campus facilities with capitals in formal communication. On second reference, if the name is partial, you may shorten the name with the appropriate designation. On second reference when you use no proper name, lowercase hall, center and building.

Right: The Public Relations Office is located in Holloway Hall. The hall is the oldest building on campus.

Right: The art sale is in the Guerrieri University Center. The Guerrieri Center also houses the bookstore.

Following are the official names of some campus buildings/facilities:

Alumni House

Bellavance Honors Center

Bosserman Center for Conflict Resolution

Commons, not The Commons

Conway Hall (formerly TETC)

Devilbiss Hall

Guerrieri Student Union

Gull's Nest

Henson Science Hall

Indoor Tennis Center

Maggs Physical Activities Center

Multiethnic Student Services (formerly Minority Affairs)

Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons (shorten to Guerrieri Academic Commons)

Perdue Hall

Philosophy House

Salisbury University Art Galleries

Scarborough Student Leadership Center (shorten to Scarborough Center)

Sea Gull Square

Sea Gull Stadium

SU Foundation Center

Tennis Courts

Underpass

University Gallery, Fulton Hall (not Fulton Hall Gallery)

C

Campuswide, not campus wide. Also citywide, countywide, nationwide, statewide, systemwide, worldwide, but university-wide.

“care” words Child care, day care and health care are all two words.

catalog, not catalogue (CHANGED 2003).

classes/courses Use lowercase when you refer to courses and classes, unless you use the specific name of a class or the class uses a proper noun or numeral.

Right: I had an industrial arts class and a math class.

Right: I had Spanish I, Psychology II and World Civilization.

co-ed/co-op Do not hyphenate the words “coeducational” or “cooperative” unless you abbreviate them; the word “co-ed” is not to be used in any press release.

committees Capitalize names of specific committees and lowercase second references.

Right: The Space Committee will meet next Thursday. The committee plans to meet on Thursdays on a regular basis.

coursework, not course work.

courtesy titles Do not put a courtesy title before a person’s name if a degree title follows it. Use the abbreviations only after a full name. Lowercase titles unless they precede a name. Second and subsequent references generally use last names only.

Mr., Mrs., Ms. and Miss are generally not used in either first or subsequent references. When referring to the names of a couple, do not use Mr. and Mrs. John Smith; do use John and Joyce Smith, unless Mr. and Mrs. is preferred by the persons involved.

When the copy concerns two or more persons with the same last name use full names on second reference.

The title Dr. may be used when the person holds an earned doctoral degree, either a Ph.D., Ed.D., D.V.M. or M.D. A Juris Doctorate (J.D.) is not considered a doctoral degree. Separate a long title from a name using commas.

Certification designations such as CPA and APR should be preceded by a comma and should be written in full caps with no periods.

Right: Dr. Carol Williamson, vice president of student affairs, spoke on Sunday.

Right: The vice president of student affairs, Dr. Carol Williamson, spoke on Sunday.

Right: Vice President of Student Affairs Carol Williamson spoke on Sunday.

Wrong: Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Carol Williamson spoke on Sunday.

D

dates Do not use the word “on” with dates. To describe sequences or inclusive dates or times use hyphen (-) for the word “to.”

Wrong: the program ends on December 15, 1996.

Right: The program ends Tuesday, December 15, 1996.

Right: The program ends in December 1996. (no comma between month and year)

Wrong: Apply here May 7 to 9, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Right: Apply here May 7-9, 8-10 a.m.

Right: Apply here May 7-9, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

The month and day are always spelled out.

E

email lowercase “e,” without hyphen (*Rev. 5/14 in compliance with AP Style change*).

ensure, insure Ensure means to guarantee; insure means to establish a contract for insurance of some type.

entitled, titled Entitled means one has the right to something, as in, “She is entitled to the inheritance.” Use titled to introduce the name of a publication, musical composition, etc.

F

faculty/staff Collective nouns, used in the singular sense.

Right: The Spanish faculty meets regularly with the other language faculties.

first (second, third ...), not firstly (secondly, thirdly ...).

G

General Education Always capitalize General Education in reference to SU’s core courses.

Right: She completed her General Education requirements last spring.

GPA Abbreviation for grade point average; capitalize with no periods. Acceptable in all references.

H

historical periods Capitalize the names of historical periods. Spell out first through ninth centuries and use numbers for 10th and above with century in lowercase. Capitalize colonial when referring to the historical period; lowercase as a style of architecture.

Right: the Renaissance.

Right: Baroque music.

Right: the 20th century.

honors Lowercase and italicize *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*. Do not capitalize “honors” when referring to programs in the University’s Honors College (CHANGED 2020).

I

internet, lowercase. (*Rev. 4/16 in compliance with AP Style change*)

M

majors Lowercase with the exception of proper nouns.

money Use the dollar sign and numbers for amounts including and over \$1 (“a dollar” is acceptable in casual discourse). Use the numeral and the word “cents” for amounts less than \$1. Do not use a decimal and two zeros.

Wrong: \$15.00

Right: \$15

Wrong: \$.09

Right: 9 cents

For dollar amounts beyond thousands, use the dollar sign, number and appropriate word.

Wrong: The grant was \$21,500,000.

Right: The grant was \$21.5 million.

N

numbers Spell out whole numbers one through nine, use figures for 10 and above. Use figures for dimensions, percentages, ages, distances, sports statistics and computer storage capacities. Always spell out grade levels and numbers used at the beginning of sentences.

Right: nine secretaries.

Right: 17 offices.

Right: His son is 9 years old.

Right: Seventeen students are enrolled in the class.

O

Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity “Activity” is singular in this name.

on campus, on-campus Use on-campus when you describe things; use on campus when you show location.

Right: Students live in on-campus housing.

Right: I will live on campus.

Right: On- and off-campus housing are available.

online, not on-line.

P

percentages In all text, write percentages with the numeral and % symbol (ex. He attended 90% of the classes). (*Rev. 2020 in compliance with AP Style change*)

playoffs, not play offs.

preseason (postseason), not pre-season (post-season).

R

race and ethnicity Capitalize names of races and ethnic groups (Caucasian, Hispanic), but generally do not capitalize black and white when used to refer to races. Generally use African-American in reference to black students.

regional designations Use capitals when referring to an area as a region but lowercase when referring to a geographical location. Capitalize Eastern Shore and Lower Shore. Capitalize Shore in second reference. Capitalize Delmarva Peninsula, but lowercase peninsula in second reference.

Right: SU is located on the Eastern Shore.

Right: The Eastern Shore is located on the Delmarva Peninsula. The peninsula is a summer haven for beachgoers.

Right: Salisbury University is located on the Lower Shore.

S

Sea Gulls, two words, each capitalized for SU's mascot; not Seagulls nor seagulls.

semester hours Do not abbreviate semester hours in text. In lists or tables abbreviate semester hours with lowercase and periods.

Right: She completed 65 semester hours last year.

state/federal Capitalize the word "state" or "federal" only when contained in the formal name of a corporate or governmental body. Lowercase when used as an adjective to distinguish something from state, county, city, town or private entities.

Right: our state universities.

Right: the federal loans.

Right: I live in the state of Maryland and I work for the State of Maryland.

states Spell out names of states when they stand alone; abbreviate according to postal rules when they stand with a city (see attached).

Right: Salisbury University students are eligible for Maryland financial aid.

Right: The sophomore came from Berlin, MD. (The period is to end the sentence; postal abbreviations do not carry periods.)

student classifications Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior or senior except as a class designation.

Right: The Senior Class sponsored the exhibit.

Right: He is a senior communications major.

Freshman is singular, freshmen is plural; however, only freshman is used as the adjective form.

Right: The freshman class met with several key sophomores.

Right: Freshman residence halls.

Right: Freshmen at Salisbury University.

T

telephone numbers Consider the area code part of the phone number.

Right: 410-543-6030.

If more than one extension is included use a shilling (/) between the numbers.

Right: 410-543-6030/6032.

theatre, not theater.

time When writing a time that falls on the hour, do not use :00. Simply state the hour with a.m. or p.m. (set in lowercase with no space around the periods). Use "o'clock" only under formal circumstances such as wedding invitations.

Wrong: The concert begins at 8:00 p.m.

Right: The concert begins at 8 p.m.

For 12 a.m. and 12 p.m. use midnight and noon, respectively.

Right: The morning session will end at noon.

Use “past” when referring to time.

Wrong: In years passed.

Right: In years past.

titles The titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, musical compositions, plays, artworks and TV/radio programs should be in italics; articles and essays, short stories, chapters, songs or parts of compositions, sections of periodicals and poems should be in quotes. For classical music titles, use quotation marks around the composition’s nicknames, but not for compositions identified by sequence. No underlines are to be used in any case.

Right: Dvorak’s “New World Symphony.”

Right: Dvorak’s Symphony No. 9.

toward, not towards.

U

University Capitalize University in all references to SU.

Right: The University consists of four schools and two colleges.

Right: He attends a university in Mississippi.

W

website one word, no capitalization.

United States Postal Abbreviations

Alabama	AL	Montana	MT
Alaska	AK	Nebraska	NE
Arizona	AZ	Nevada	NV
Arkansas	AR	New Hampshire	NH
California	CA	New Jersey	NJ
Colorado	CO	New Mexico	NM
Connecticut	CT	New York	NY
Delaware	DE	North Carolina	NC
District of Columbia	DC	North Dakota	ND
Florida	FL	Ohio	OH
Georgia	GA	Oklahoma	OK
Hawaii	HI	Oregon	OR
Idaho	ID	Pennsylvania	PA
Illinois	IL	Puerto Rico	PR
Indiana	IN	Rhode Island	RI
Iowa	IA	South Carolina	SC
Kansas	KS	South Dakota	SD
Kentucky	KY	Tennessee	TN
Louisiana	LA	Texas	TX
Maine	ME	Utah	UT
Maryland	MD	Vermont	VT
Massachusetts	MA	Virginia	VA
Michigan	MI	Washington	WA
Minnesota	MN	West Virginia	WV
Mississippi	MS	Wisconsin	WI
Missouri	MO	Wyoming	WY

Inclusive Language Policy

As an institution that stands for equality of educational and employment opportunity, Salisbury University affirms its commitment to creating a campus environment free of arbitrary discrimination and bias, both subtle and overt. All personnel, when representing the University to its publics, are urged to use language that indicates respect for human diversity.

In accordance with that aim, those preparing official University publications or written communications shall avoid biased language of two kinds: 1) using generic masculine words or titles to refer to all persons; and 2) using terms or expressions that reinforce demeaning attitudes or assumptions about persons or groups on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

When illustrations are included in publications, they shall be chosen to reflect diversity according to guidelines suggested in style sheets of appropriate academic professional organizations. Care shall be taken to ensure that women, minorities and disabled persons are portrayed in nonstereotypical ways.

This policy is mandatory with respect to the public documents of the University. That is, the University is obliged to ensure that the form of the following documents reflects inclusive language:

- Faculty Handbook
- Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog
- Recruitment and admissions materials
- Student financial aid materials
- Brochures with campuswide distribution
- Press releases
- Publications for alumni
- Publications of Career Services and Counseling Services
- Fundraising materials

This policy is suggested and encouraged with respect to the content of individual documents related to instruction and collegial communication which faculty and administrators prepare and use. That is, faculty and administrators are asked to exercise their own judgment and to practice the spirit of inclusiveness in the language they use with students and their colleagues. Individual documents of instruction and collegial communication include but are not limited to:

- Course syllabi
- Problems and exercises
- Cases and case studies
- Drills and quizzes
- Tests and examinations
- Lab manuals and handbooks
- Simulations and games
- Lectures and speeches

Deans, department heads and administrators will review their units' contributions to the public documents of the University for the use of inclusive language and a balance of illustrations. The University Curriculum Committee will review and, if necessary, offer editorial suggestions for all new course titles and descriptions which appear in public documents. It is the responsibility of the Public Relations Office to ensure that the changes decided upon by appropriate University committees or University authorities are integrated into the public documents of the University.

All those involved in making changes should follow the guidelines set forth in the following documents:

Guidelines for Nonsexist Language of the American Psychological Association (APA)

Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)