THE WRITER'S

S T Y L E
G U I D E

Georgia State
University®

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WHY CONFORM?

The Georgia State University community takes pride in its great students, faculty, staff and alumni. Hundreds of offices and departments on our campuses produce their own digital content, memos, letters, brochures, posters, invitations, fliers, booklets, catalogs, magazines and newsletters. Writers and editors have their own priorities and objectives.

But all Georgia State publications and communications — print and digital — have one thing in common, no matter where they originate: They can only be effective if they reflect consistency and clarity in our messages.

They often have another thing in common, too: the reader. Many of our audiences overlap. One reader may receive an Andrew Young School of Policy Studies brochure, an invitation from the Office of Development, a copy of the Georgia State University Magazine, a flier about scholarship opportunities from the Honors College and a letter from the dean of students — all in one week. Imagine the confusion that would ensue if every part of the university community used the English language differently. Our readers would wonder if we're all really talking about the same place.

It's for the sake of our readers that we advocate using a clear, consistent, contemporary style of writing in non-academic documents, websites or publications originating from Georgia State University.

GUIDELINES, NOT RULES

The English language gives us many choices and decisions to make when we write, which challenges many prescriptive approaches to standardizing use.

This guide will not answer all of your questions. It may not help you win an argument over which way to spell "website" or whether to hyphenate "email." However, it will give you a foundation upon which to base your own writing decisions and help you improve the clarity and consistency of the communications coming out of your office or department.

We've assembled these guidelines using the *Associated Press Stylebook* as a primary authority because much of our writing is intended for external readers: prospective students and their parents, donors and prospective donors, government officials, business leaders, news reporters and editors, and the public. At the same time, we often deviate from Associated Press (AP) standards because we are not journalists, and our writing frequently serves purposes AP standards do not accommodate.

If you can't find what you're looking for in here, consult the latest edition of the *Associated Press Stylebook* or *American Heritage Dictionary*.

DO NOT apply these guidelines to technical or academic writing. Other sources can help you with this specialized kind of writing.

DO use this style guide to help you when you're writing anything (and everything) intended for the campus audience or for the public.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines. University-wide consistency builds the credibility of our communications, demonstrates our commitment to high-quality standards and greatly enhances our audiences' understanding of Georgia State.

Whatever style you follow, remember consistency and clarity are the keys to more effective communication. Make sure your preferred writing standards are consistent in all of your communications.

Just as the English language has evolved over the years, this style guide will adapt to new use and trends, sometimes based on observations from people like you. If you have some writing suggestions of your own, share them with us by emailing Benjamin Hodges at bhodges1@gsu.edu.

UNIVERSITY IDENTITY

Name
Georgia State University
Our national and international identity hinges on the words "Georgia State University." Do not use the initialism "GSU." Beyond our community of insiders, this acronym is not well recognized and may be confused with other institutions.

We want to proclaim the university's name, not obscure it. Some of your readers may use the term "GSU" themselves, but never risk minimizing the recognition or impact of the name "Georgia State University."

In general, use the full name "Georgia State University" the first time you refer to the university in text. Upon second reference and thereafter, use "Georgia State" or "university." Per Associated Press (AP) style, use lowercase when using "the university" as a reference. When writing for internal audiences familiar with the university, you may refer to the university as "GSU."

> **Right:** Georgia State University is in Atlanta. The university was started in 1913.

"GSU" may be used on social media and within athletics.

Logo
The Georgia State University logo is a unit composed of two parts:

- **the university name in specially modified type treatments (logotype)**
- **a graphic mark (flame)**

The two parts of the logo — the mark and logotype — are always used together. Neither the mark nor the logotype may be manipulated or changed.

The graphic mark is an abstract representation of the letters "G" and "S." Its purpose is not to represent the school's initials literally, but to function as a strong visual symbol that is easily recognized, remembered and associated with Georgia State University.

The mark supports further symbolism. For example, the flame-like aspect can represent both the traditional flame of knowledge as well as the mythical phoenix, the symbol of Atlanta's post-Civil War rebirth.

The Georgia State University logo is a registered trademark protected by federal law and should always have the registered trademark symbol ® with it. Employees of the university can download the logo from the university's

digital asset library available at commkit.gsu.edu/tools/dal. For more details, contact Renata Irving, creative director for Public Relations & Marketing Communications, at 404-413-1363 or renatairving@gsu.edu.

University Logo parts

MARK

LOGOTYPE

GeorgiaState University®

Academic Degrees

Spell out and use lowercase: associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctor's degree or doctorate.

You can receive a doctorate OR your doctor's degree, but NOT your doctoral degree.

Abbreviate degrees, and be sure to use periods after all the letters: B.A., M.S., Ph.D., M.S.I.A., B.F.A., M.P.H., M.S.W. and so on (with the exception of MBA).

Right: Two years after earning an associate of arts degree through Perimeter College, he graduated from the Atlanta Campus with a bachelor's degree in education.

Right: She received her master of science degree in biology.

Right: We awarded 99 doctor's, 150 master's and 900 bachelor's degrees.

Right: She has an M.A. degree in technical writing.

Right: He earned a bachelor of music degree.

Wrong: He earned a bachelor's of anthropology.

When listing alumni degrees, place the last two digits of the graduation year (preceded by an apostrophe) with the degree abbreviation in parentheses. List degrees in chronological order. It is important that the apostrophe point in the correct direction: down and to the left. Do not place a comma between the year and the degree.

Right: Former State Senator David Adelman (M.P.A. '95) served as the United States Ambassador to Singapore from 2010–13.

Right: Brian Egan (B.F.A. '12) oversees programming at the Mammal Gallery, an arts and performance facility in south downtown.

UNIVERSITY IDENTITY

If a person received more than one degree from Georgia State University, name each with its year of completion, and separate them with commas.

    Right: Randy Patterson (B.B.A. '98, MBA '01) is vice president of human resources at Recall, a records management company.

    Right: Joyce Mitchell (B.A. '08, M.A. '10)

Use "Dr." in first reference as a formal title before the name of a person who holds a doctor of medicine degree (M.D.), doctor of osteopathy (D.O.) degree or any other terminal medical practice degree. While not preferred, you may also use "Dr." in first reference to describe academic scholars with other types of doctorates. As always, maintain consistency throughout your materials.

Do not precede a name with a title of an academic degree ("Dr.") and follow it with the abbreviation for that degree ("Ph.D.").

Do not use "Dr." before the names of individuals who hold honorary degrees only. References to honorary degrees must specify the degree was honorary.

    Right: Dr. William Keeling directs the cardiothoracic surgery program at Grady Memorial Hospital.

    Right: Carl V. Patton, Ph.D., was president of Georgia State University from 1992–2008.

    Right: Carl V. Patton was president of Georgia State University from 1992–2008.

    Right: Dr. Mark Becker will deliver the address.

    Right: Dr. Wayne Erickson, the beloved Spenser scholar in the English Department, retired in 2010.

    Wrong: Dr. Carl V. Patton, Ph.D., was president of Georgia State University from 1992–2008.

The last name may be used with no title at all, which is often preferable to maintain consistency.

Acronyms and Initialisms

An acronym is a series of letters taken from a set of words that is pronounced as a word (for example, "NATO" for the North American Trade Organization). An initialism is a set of initials taken from a set of words where each letter is pronounced separately (for example, "DEA" for the Drug Enforcement Agency).

In general, you may use acronyms and initialisms if they are commonly recognized or help avoid repetition. However, always spell out the full name,

title or phrase the first time you refer to it in text, followed immediately by the acronym or initialism in parentheses. You should then use the acronym or initialism for each and every subsequent use. If there is only one reference, spell out the full name and do not note the acronym or initialism in parentheses. For the sake of brevity, headlines may use unidentified acronyms, but make sure to spell out the full term upon first reference in text.

Right: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded the grant to the research group. The NIH funded only three such centers in the nation.

Right: The College of Education & Human Development received a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) grant.

Wrong: The five-year research project is funded by the National Institute on Aging of the NIH.

Addresses and Locations

While many cities use directional prefixes, Atlanta uses directional suffixes, and no city of Atlanta postal address is complete without one. For example, there is no such thing as "30 Courtland St." or "75 Piedmont Ave." or "55 Boulevard."

In fact, there are two potential locations for each of these incomplete addresses: 30 Courtland St. NE and 30 Courtland St. SE, 75 Piedmont Ave. NE and 75 Piedmont Ave. SE, and so on. Each of these complete addresses is blocks away from its counterpart in the adjacent quadrant. In another example, Grant Street Southeast has no relation to Grant Street Southwest, and the two are miles away from each other. (Note: Do not abbreviate the directional suffix without a number, and do not punctuate abbreviations.)

Without the correct directional suffix, readers can and will end up lost trying to find locations in the wrong quadrant of the city, and the Post Office will either return mail to the sender or deliver mail to unintended recipients. Publishing addresses without directional suffixes is tantamount to telling readers to visit and send materials to places that do not exist. This rule applies to addresses in body copy and on envelopes and letterheads.

Right: The Parker H. Petit Science Center at 100 Piedmont Ave. SE is five blocks away from the University Commons at 141 Piedmont Ave. NE.

Right: The Welcome Center operates out of the first floor of Centennial Hall at 100 Auburn Ave. NE.

Wrong: 80 Forsyth St.

Wrong: 34 Peachtree Street

Wrong: 33 Gilmer St.

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Spell out and capitalize formal street names, but use lowercase when you're referring to more than one in a phrase or are using general, unspecified street words. Spell out and capitalize numbered streets First–Ninth.

Right: Peachtree Center Avenue used to be called Ivy Street.
Right: Enter Hurt Park at the corner of Courtland and Gilmer streets.
Right: Cobblestone streets surround the hotel.
Wrong: The university recently constructed new student housing at the corner of Piedmont and John Wesley Dobbs Avenues.

Use the abbreviations "Ave.," "Blvd.," "Rd.," "Dr.," "St." and so forth every time you can include a numbered address; never use them without a number.

Right: Send mail to 100 Auburn Ave. NE.
Right: The president lives on Pennsylvania Avenue.
Wrong: The city renamed Houston St., Butler St. and Forrest Ave. after local heros and civil rights leaders.

Campuses

Georgia State University has seven campuses: Atlanta Campus, Alpharetta Campus, Buckhead Center, Clarkston Campus, Decatur Campus, Dunwoody Campus and Newton Campus.

Campus Buildings and Facilities

Proper names of buildings, such as "Piedmont Central," should be capitalized. Special building projects, such as the "Creative Media Industries Institute," should also be capitalized. Terms such as "north wing" and "new residence hall" should not be capitalized unless they are used in the title of the building.

Some parts of campus have confusing names. Make sure you refer to buildings and facilities correctly and consistently. We present here a few commonly misused building and facility names, but if you're ever unsure, consult campus maps from the Facilities Management Services Division at facilities.gsu.edu for the latest, official information.

One Park Place
"One Park Place" is the name of the building; it isn't the building's mailing address. "1 Park Place SE" is the building's mailing address; it isn't the building's name. "1 Park Place" is neither the name of the building nor its mailing address.

Right: Public Relations & Marketing Communications moved from One Park Place to Centennial Hall.

Right: Visit the School of Public Health at 1 Park Place SE.
Wrong: One Park Place
       Atlanta, GA 30303

Speaker's Auditorium
The auditorium in Student Center East has only one name.

Right: The talk will be held in the Speaker's Auditorium.
Wrong: The Speakers Auditorium is host to many of the university's best attractions.
Wrong: The Speakers' Auditorium seats 425 people.

University Bookstore Building
The University Bookstore has only one name and is found inside the University Bookstore Building (not Student Center West, which is immediately adjacent to it).

Right: University Bookstore
Wrong: GSU Campus Store

Floors

When referencing the floor of a building in body copy, follow standard AP rules for spelling out ordinal numbers under 10. (See "Numbers" on p. 27 for more information.) In a mailing address, always use the numeral. Do not capitalize the word "floor" in either case.

Right: The board met on the ninth floor of Langdale Hall.
Right: The English Department moved to the 23rd floor of 25 Park Place.
Right: 100 Auburn Ave. NE
       4th floor
Wrong: 34 Broad St. NW
       Seventh floor

Rooms

A room number is not a mailing address and should not be written like one. For example, "200 Sparks Hall" does not correspond to "200 Woodward Ave. SE," and formatting them both the same way may lead to confusion, especially with readers unfamiliar with our campuses.

Instead, in body copy, place the room or suite location after the name of the building in lowercase without using a comma. In mailing addresses and headings of any kind, capitalize the room location and place it on the next line, or separate the building name and capitalized room name and number with

a comma. Note that these rules apply best to rooms on the Atlanta Campus and Buckhead Center.

Right: For assistance, visit the Enrollment Services Center in Sparks Hall room 227.

Right: Aderhold Learning Center, Room 023

Right: Contact the Cooperative Education & Internship Office at Dahlberg Hall suite 134.

Right: New Student Orientation
Student Center East
55 Gilmer St. SE
Suite 304
Atlanta, GA 30303

Right: Centennial Hall
Suite 200

Wrong: 260 Student Center West, Sparks Hall 200

Wrong: Consult an adviser at the Office of Academic Assistance in Langdale Hall Suite 418.

Wrong: Consult an adviser at the Office of Academic Assistance in Langdale Hall, suite 418.

Names and Classifications

Georgia State's centers, colleges, departments, divisions, institutes, offices, schools and units do not adhere to a strict naming system, but here is a rough guide to help you use and understand the different words we use to talk about the university's many components.

"Colleges" and "schools" can be synonymous (the College of Law and School of Public Health are both technically colleges of equal authority and rank), where larger organizations with many academic departments tend to take the word "college" and smaller organizations tend to take the word "school."

This is no strict rule, however, because schools can be housed within colleges or even other schools. The School of Music and the Ernest G. Welch School of Art & Design, for example, are part of the College of the Arts, and the School of Nursing is part of the Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing & Health Professions.

"Institutes" and "centers" often have similar purposes and engage in similar activities, but only institutes, such as the Institute for Biomedical Sciences, can offer degree programs. Centers, such as the Center for State & Local Finance, cannot. Note that institutes do not *have to* offer degree programs to be institutes; they *have to be able to* offer them.

"Division" can be particularly tricky. In general, "division" designates an administrative area or group of administrative departments (sometimes called "offices") overseen by a vice president. Jerry Rackliffe is the senior vice president of the Division of Finance & Administration, which contains, in one example, the Department of Budget & Planning. Likewise, Douglass Covey is the vice president of the Division of Student Affairs, which contains the Office of Civic Engagement, among others.

At the same time, "divisions" can also refer to groupings of academic departments within colleges, such as the Natural & Computational Sciences Division of the College of Arts & Sciences. The College of Education & Human Development even has a single department called a "division" (the Learning Technologies Division), and the Facilities Management Services Division is itself part of the Division of Finance & Administration. These examples are exceptions to the rule, however.

"Unit" is usually reserved for budgetary purposes (a "budget unit") but can also be synonymous with "department," whether academic (Department of English) or administrative (Campus Services).

Colleges and Schools

Georgia State University is composed of 10 colleges: the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing & Health Professions, College of the Arts, College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education & Human Development, College of Law, Honors College, Perimeter College, J. Mack Robinson College of Business and School of Public Health.

You may describe a college's relationship to the university in three ways, depending on context and personal preference: "[the] [college] at Georgia State University" (with or without the definite article as appropriate), "Georgia State University's [college]" or "the Georgia State University [college]." Never use slashes, colons, commas or dashes.

Note: While all three methods are appropriate for every college, the preferred name for Perimeter College is "Georgia State University's Perimeter College."

Right: The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University
Right: Perimeter College at Georgia State University
Right: Georgia State University's College of Arts & Sciences
Right: The Georgia State University School of Public Health

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Three colleges in particular may go by abbreviated names, especially in internal communications: "the Andrew Young School," "the Lewis School" and "Robinson." You may use these abbreviations upon second reference.

At the same time, three colleges in particular may use initialisms, especially in internal communications: "CAS" for the College of Arts & Sciences, "AYS" or "AYSPS" for the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, and "CEHD" for the College of Education & Human Development. The context will determine if these are appropriate. If they will help you avoid clumsy repetition and save space, use them as long as you spell out the full name of the college upon first reference and immediately follow the full name by the acronym in parentheses. See "Acronyms and Initialisms" on pp. 10–11 for more information.

Departments, Divisions and Offices

Capitalize the entire names of departments, divisions and offices. While it is not always necessary to include the words "department," "division" and "office," capitalize them if you use them. Note also that, in most cases, you can place these words either before or after the proper name. Use lowercase for the words "department," "division" and "office" when they stand alone.

Right:	He works in the Office of the Registrar.
Right:	Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.
Right:	Contact Financial Aid for more information.
Right:	The Department of Astronomy hosts weekly viewing nights on university telescopes.
Right:	The Budget & Planning Department is on the fourth floor of Sparks Hall.
Right:	She's been with the department for three years.
Right:	Public Relations & Marketing Communications oversees the university's website.
Wrong:	The division of Public Relations & Marketing Communications recently relocated to Centennial Hall.
Wrong:	The Division will release its report.

Capitalize the field only when it refers to a specific department, division or office. Otherwise, use lowercase.

Right:	She's trying to get more experience working in student affairs.
Right:	Student Affairs oversees Recreational Services. (The university's Division of Student Affairs oversees the Department of Recreational Services.)
Right:	The Department of English redesigned its website.
Right:	After majoring in physics, she became a physics professor.

Do not capitalize the names of departments, divisions and offices when they occur in a person's title.

Right:	The director of admissions is pleased with the number of applicants.
Right:	Darryl Holloman is the associate vice president for student affairs and dean of students.

Centers and Institutes

The formal names of centers, such as the Fiscal Research Center or the University Advisement Center, and institutes, such as the Confucius Institute, should be capitalized, but "center" and "institute" used alone should be in lowercase. Upon second reference, it is not necessary to use the complete proper name.

Right:	The Institute of International Business hosts seminars.
Right:	The institute will welcome dozens of affiliates.
Right:	The Student Recreation Center opened in 1996.
Right:	The Andrew Young School is host to 12 major research centers.

Contractions

In most non-academic writing, contractions convey a more conversational tone, making your text easier to read. Unless a more formal construction helps emphasize the meaning of a sentence or phrase, use contractions, and use them consistently.

You'll notice we've used contractions frequently in this publication, except for points of emphasis, as in "do not" instead of "don't."

Headlines

Use title case in all headlines, which means capitalize the first, last and all major words, excepting articles, and prepositions and conjunctions of three letters or fewer.

Ph.D.

The preferred form for Ph.D. is to say a person holds a doctorate in the name of his or her field of specialty. Second best is to say "doctor's degree."

Rev.

When used before an individual's name, precede it with "the."

Right:	The Rev. Miller will speak at the assembly.
Right:	The Reverend Miller will speak.

UNIVERSITY IDENTITY

Wrong: Rev. Miller will be there.
Wrong: The Rev. will be there.

States

Spell out the names of the 50 United States when they stand alone in text.

Right: Most students come from Georgia.
Wrong: We have 50 students from Fla.

When referencing a city and a state together, do not use postal abbreviations in your text. Use the following AP abbreviations. Note that some states must always be spelled out.

Ala.	Ga.	Maine	Neb.	Ohio	Texas
Alaska	Hawaii	Md.	Nev.	Okla.	Utah
Ariz.	Idaho	Mass.	N.H.	Ore.	Vt.
Ark.	Ill.	Mich.	N.J.	Pa.	Va.
Calif.	Ind.	Minn.	N.M.	R.I.	Wash.
Colo.	Iowa	Miss.	N.Y.	S.C.	W.Va.
Conn.	Kan.	Mo.	N.C.	S.D.	Wis.
Del.	Ky.	Mont.	N.D.	Tenn.	Wyo.
Fla.	La.				

Use "Washington, D.C." Don't abbreviate to "D.C." or, worse, "DC."

Right: The conference is in Macon, Ga.
Wrong: The conference is in Macon, GA.

Do not use states with these U.S. cities:

Atlanta	Detroit	Minneapolis	Salt Lake City
Baltimore	Honolulu	New Orleans	San Antonio
Boston	Houston	New York City	San Diego
Chicago	Indianapolis	Oklahoma City	San Francisco
Cincinnati	Las Vegas	Philadelphia	Seattle
Cleveland	Los Angeles	Phoenix	Washington, D.C.
Dallas	Miami	Pittsburgh	
Denver	Milwaukee	St. Louis	

Always spell out a state name if it's part of a title or name, such as "The Georgia Department of Education."

For more information, see "City, State" on p. 31.

U.S./United States

"United States" is best, but frequent repetition or spatial constraints can necessitate "U.S." on occasion. Avoid "USA" and "America," and stay consistent.

CAPITALIZATION

Academic Degrees
Use lowercase when using associate, bachelor's, master's or doctor's degree.
Use lowercase for doctorate or doctoral program.

Academic Departments
See "Departments, Divisions and Offices" on pp. 16–17.

a.m. / p.m.
Use lowercase and periods for "a.m." and "p.m."

Board of Regents
Upon first reference, use "The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia." Use lowercase when "board" and "regents" are used separately. Capitalize a regent's title only when used before the name.

Right: He is a member of The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.
Right: The board met at 9 a.m.
Right: Regent James Jolly addressed the issue.
Right: She is a regent.
Right: The Board of Regents will meet tomorrow.
Wrong: The board of regents will meet tomorrow.

Classes and Courses
Use lowercase when you refer to classes and courses unless you use the specific (and complete) title or the name itself contains a proper noun or numeral.

Right: I had a class in engineering management.
Right: I'm taking English 1101.
Right: I'm taking biology, Advanced Shakespeare and calculus.

Commencement
Use lowercase for "commencement" when used generically in text. You may capitalize it when it's used in a title to refer to a specific event, such as the "100th Commencement" or "2015 Spring Commencement."

Committees
Capitalize the formal names of groups and committees, such as Administrative Council, Planning & Development Committee, and Staff Council. Use lowercase for the words "committee" or "council" when they stand alone.

Dean's List
Always use lowercase: the dean's list.

CAPITALIZATION

Districts and Neighborhoods

Use lowercase for general sections of a city, but capitalize proper names of neighborhoods.

Right:	The meetings will be downtown.
Right:	Hell's Kitchen has undergone extensive gentrification since the early 1990s.
Right:	The university is expanding into Old Fourth Ward and Summerhill.
Right:	Let's go to a restaurant in Buckhead.

Fax

Use lowercase when the word "fax" appears in a sentence. If you're providing a fax number on your business card or in a listing, it's okay to use an initial capital.

Right: Email or fax me the information.

Right: Georgia State University
College of Arts & Sciences
Phone: 404-413-5114
Fax: 404-413-5117

Federal Government

Use lowercase when the word "federal" is an adjective and not does appear in the proper name of a government agency: federal court, the federal government, the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Homecoming

Use lowercase for "homecoming" when used generically in text. You may capitalize it when it's used in a title to refer to a specific event.

Honors

Use lowercase and italicize "*cum laude*," "*magna cum laude*" and "*summa cum laude*."

Hyphenated Words in Titles

In general, always capitalize the first unit, and capitalize the second unit if it's a noun or adjective or if it has equal balance with the first unit.

Right:	"Twentieth-Century Poets in South America"
Right:	"City-States in 19th-Century Europe"
Right:	"Non-Christian Religions in North America"

CAPITALIZATION

The second unit should be in lowercase if it's a participle modifying the first unit or if both units constitute a single word.

Right: "English-speaking People throughout Asia"
Right: "Medium-sized Companies with Unions"
Right: "E-flat Minor Melody"
Right: "Re-establishing a Youthful Outlook"
Right: "Self-fulfilling Prophecies in Small-Town America"

Race

Capitalize names of races (African-American, Caucasian, Asian, Native American), but do not capitalize "black" or "white" when referring to race.

Regions

Region names are capitalized when they stand alone and are widely understood to designate a specific geographic area.

Right: western Georgia
Right: the West Coast, the Midwest, the South
Right: the east coast of Florida, the midwestern United States, southern Tennessee
Right: North Georgia, West Georgia, the Piedmont, Middle Georgia

Seasons

Capitalize only when used in a title or as part of a formal name. Use lowercase when these words stand alone.

Right: fall semester, summer program
Right: The program started in fall 2012.
Right: The Spring Fling will be repeated this year.

Semesters

Do not capitalize semesters in text.

Right: Pantherpalooza takes place during the spring semester. Homecoming occurs in the fall semester.

Georgia State uses these semester titles: fall, spring, summer, Maymester (always capitalize) and mini-mester.

Social Security

Capitalize "Social Security," but lowercase "number." Capitalize references to the Social Security Administration.

Right: Fill in your name and Social Security number.
Right: The forms will be forwarded to Social Security.

Student Classifications

Do not capitalize "freshman," "sophomore," "junior," "senior," "postdoctoral fellow" or "graduate student." But do capitalize as a class designation or formal title.

Right: He's a senior engineering major.
Right: The Senior Class gift was the clock.

Titles

A person's title is capitalized only when used before his or her name. When using a capitalized title immediately before the name, try to keep it short. Do not capitalize an occupational designation, only a true title.

Right: We met President Becker.
Right: The president will speak at the dinner.
Right: Vice President for Student Affairs Douglass Covey issued the memo.
Right: Our speaker will be primatologist Jane Goodall.

Titles following a person's name should appear in lowercase. Use lowercase when a title is used alone.

Right: The president of Georgia State University will address the group.
Right: Timothy Renick, vice provost and vice president of enrollment management and student success, will host the reception.

Do not capitalize "professor," "associate professor" or "assistant professor," whether used alone or before a person's name, unless they are the first words in a sentence. In titles, the term "professor" is used very specifically. The word should be used only in references to those who have official status as full professors. Otherwise, use the correct title of "assistant professor" or "associate professor."

Right: Professor Jennifer McCoy is a professor of political science.
Right: Contact professor Jennifer McCoy in the Department of Political Science.
Right: His years of hard work were acknowledged when he earned the rank of university professor.

CAPITALIZATION

Capitalize the official names of honorary chaired and university professorships. Use "the" to introduce named professorships.

Right: Renowned public finance and education policy expert Ross Rubenstein joined the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies in 2015 to assume the Dan E. Sweat Distinguished Chair in Educational and Community Policy.

Right: Regents' Professor Teryl Frey has received a Fulbright Scholarship.

University System of Georgia

Capitalize "University System of Georgia."

Right: The University System of Georgia comprises 29 colleges and universities.

DATES, NUMBERS AND TIME

Dates

When a month is used with a specific date, use it this way:

Jan. 1	Feb. 1	March 1	April 1	May 1	June 1
July 1	Aug. 1	Sept. 1	Oct. 1	Nov. 1	Dec. 1

Spell out the name of the month when using it alone or with a year. When using a month and a year together, do not separate them with commas. When a phrase contains month, date and year, follow the date and the year with commas.

Right: January 2012
Right: Jan. 24
Right: Jan. 13, 2012
Right: He was born Jan. 13, 2012, in Macon, Ga.

Use an en dash to indicate a span of years. You may either drop the first two digits of the second year or keep all four. Whatever you do, stay consistent. Restrict use of the apostrophe (pointing down and to the left) to class years and alumni degrees. (See pp. 9–10 and 53 for more information.) If the years span a century change, always use all four numbers of the second year.

Right: Jerry Trickie was the associate athletics director for
            communications from 2013–15.
Right: 1979–81, 1979–2002
Right: 1979–1981, 1979–2002
Wrong: 2009–'12, '09–'12

Do not use the word "on" before a date or day of the week when its absence would not lead to confusion. Using "in" before a month is optional.

Right: The meeting will be held Monday.
Right: He will be inaugurated Feb. 22.
Right: The program ends in December.
Right: The program ends December 2017.

To describe sequences of dates, inclusive dates or other types of ranges, use an en dash instead of the words "to" or "through." If preferred, you may add a single space to either side of the en dash.

Right: The box office is open Monday – Friday.
Right: The performance will run Sept. 14–22.
Right: The program supports K–12 educators.

DATES, NUMBERS AND TIME

Do not use ordinal suffixes with dates.

  Right: Oct. 14
  Wrong: Oct. 14th

Use an "s" without an apostrophe after a year to indicate a decade. Neither spell out decades, nor abbreviate them to their last two digits. You may use an apostrophe (pointing down and to the left) only before class years to indicate the first two numbers of the year are omitted.

  Right: The university was formed in the 1910s.
  Right: She belonged to the Class of 1924.
  Right: Shannon graduated with the Class of '03.
  Wrong: The '60s were famous for hippies, flower power and the peace
          movement.
  Wrong: the fourties, the Sixties

An apostrophe after the year is needed for possessives.

  Right: The presidential election was 1980's biggest news story.

Fractions

Spell out fractions less than one, using hyphens between words and no spaces. Use numerals for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals when appropriate.

  Right: one-half, two-thirds
  Right: 1.5 liters
  Right: one and one-half liters

Money

Use the appropriate currency symbol and numerals. Do not use a decimal and two zeros for whole dollar amounts.

  Right: $150
  Right: $150.25
  Wrong: $150.00

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

  Right: $14 million
  Wrong: $14,000,000

DATES, NUMBERS AND TIME

Numbers

Spell out numbers zero through nine. Use numerals for all numbers 10 and above. Do not use superscripts for ordinal suffixes in text, but use whatever looks best in graphic design. Exceptions are noted below.

Right: nine poodles, four miles
Right: 16 buildings
Right: 15th highest, 21st Street, Sixth Avenue
Right: He teaches ninth grade.

Use numerals for ages, percentages, equipment specifications, page numbers and sums of money (when using the symbol "$").

Right: She has a daughter, 2, and a son, 8.
Right: 8 megabytes, 240 RAM
Right: According to the chart on page 4, nearly half of the elementary-age children in Georgia receive a $5 weekly allowance.

For numbers of more than three digits, use a comma after every third digit from right to left.

Right: $1,000
Right: Piedmont Central will provide housing for 1,100 students.
Wrong: $1000

For numbers beyond thousands that do not involve currency, spell out numbers under 10, and use the appropriate word to describe the quantity.

Right: Nearly three million people live in Chicago.
Right: Apple sold more than 590 million iPhones between 2007–14.
Wrong: According to the United States Department of Agriculture, an estimated 133,000,000,000 pounds of food went uneaten in 2010.

Avoid starting sentences with numbers; however, if you must, spell out the number unless it's a year.

Right: Twenty students registered.
Right: 1914 was an important year.

DATES, NUMBERS AND TIME

Percentages

Always use numerals (including the numbers 0–9) and spell out the word "percent" in text. "Percent" takes a singular verb when standing alone. When it's followed by the preposition "of," use a verb that agrees with the object of the preposition: use a singular verb if the object is singular, and use a plural verb if the object is plural.

> **Right:** Only 8 percent of the class voted.
> **Right:** He believes 50 percent is enough.
> **Right:** He believes 60 percent of the membership is coming.
> **Right:** He believes 60 percent of the members are coming.

Use the percent symbol (%) only in charts or figures and in academic, statistical or technical writing.

Rankings

Use the abbreviation "No." before a numeral when writing about rankings. If a ranking works best with words like "most" or "best," you may use ordinal numbers instead, such as "fifth most innovative" and "14th best." (Heed conventions for using numbers in text found on p. 27.) Do not use the pound symbol (#) in text, but allowances can be made for graphic design call-outs.

> **Right:** Georgia State University is ranked the No. 5 most innovative university in the nation.
> **Right:** Georgia State's College of Law has the sixth best health law program in the United States.
> **Wrong:** Georgia State has the nation's #14 most diverse student body.

Telephone Numbers

If a publication is strictly for use on campus, you may omit the area code and first two digits. Use the "3" followed by a hyphen and the four-digit extension.

> **Right:** Call us at 3-3151.

If the publication may or will be sent off campus, include the area code as part of the complete number. Use a hyphen between the area code and number. When using telephone numbers for publication, you may wish to check for accuracy by calling the number before the final edit.

> **Right:** 404-413-2000
> **Wrong:** 404/471-2000

DATES, NUMBERS AND TIME

If you use more than one number, separate them with the word "or" in text or with a slash in an address listing. When providing telephone, fax and cell phone numbers in an address listing, identify each.

Right: Call me at 404-413-3025/1357.
Right: Phone: 404-471-3151
    Fax: 404-471-5812
    Cell: 678-656-8139

Time

Use lowercase with periods for "a.m." and "p.m." When writing a time that falls on the hour, do not use ":00." Simply state the hour with "a.m.," "p.m." or "o'clock." Use "noon" and "midnight," never "12 p.m." or "12 a.m." To designate a range of time, use an en dash. If preferred, you may add a single space to either side of the en dash.

Right: 3 p.m.
Right: 3–5 p.m.
Right: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Right: Noon–1 p.m.
Right: The concert begins at 8:30 p.m.
Right: The concert begins at 8 o'clock.
Wrong: 3:00 pm
Wrong: 3 p.m.–5 p.m.
Wrong: 12 noon, 12 p.m.
Wrong: 12 midnight, 12 a.m.

When designating a time of day along with its date and day of the week, follow this sequence: day of week, date, time of day.

Right: Wednesday, Sept. 8, at 2 p.m.

PLURALS & POSSESSIVES

Names

Form plurals of family names that end in "s" by adding "es."

    Right: The Jameses live in Inman Park.
    Right: The James family lives in Inman Park.

Form plurals and possessives of proper names that end with "s," "x" and "z" like this:

    Right: Burns' poems
    Right: Marx's theories
    Right: Savitz's holdings

Plural possessives combine the above rules:

    Right: the Jones family's reputation
    Right: The Joneses' reputation

Plurals

Form plurals of the following by adding "s" alone:

    Right: dos and don'ts
    Right: CDs
    Right: M.A.s and Ph.D.s
    Right: The three Rs
    Right: the early 1920s
    Right: several YMCAs
    Right: CODs and IOUs
    Right: in twos and threes

Form plurals of the following by adding 's:

    Right: S's, A's and I's
    Right: x's and o's
    Right: SOS's

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Ampersands (&)

Do not use ampersands to replace the word "and" wherever it strikes your fancy. Ampersands should be used only in place of the word "and" when it occurs in the names and titles of departments, colleges, programs, companies, centers, buildings and so on — and they should be used in every instance. Using ampersands like this allows your reader to distinguish easily between items that contain the word "and" and limits the confusion that can arise with frequent repetition of the word "and."

Right: The Ernest G. Welch School of Art & Design operates out of the Arts & Humanities Building.
Right: She is a professor with the Department of Applied Linguistics & English as a Second Language.
Right: Mathematics & Statistics, Physics & Astronomy
Right: Budget & Planning and Finance & Administration are part of the same division.
Wrong: Chemistry & Astronomy, Parking & Transportation
Wrong: Public Relations and Marketing Communications and Auxiliary and Support Services worked together on the project.
Wrong: Visit Student Health Promotion for health & wellness information.

And/or

Avoid this informal construction.

Right: Some university departments automatically withdraw any student who enrolls in a course without first meeting its course prerequisites, grade point average requirements or both.
Wrong: Some university departments automatically withdraw any student who enrolls in a course without first meeting its course prerequisites and/or grade point average requirements.

City, State

Place a comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence.

Right: They moved from Tucson, Ariz., to Athens, Ga.
Right: Washington, D.C., was the destination.
Wrong: Kansas City, Mo. is the site of the conference.

Colons and Semicolons

Use a colon at the end of a clause to introduce lists and after an introductory statement that uses the words "as follows" or "the following." Do not use a colon between a verb or preposition and its direct object.

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Right: They asked everyone: her sister, brother, cousin and mother.
Right: They asked others, such as her sister, brother, cousin and mother.
Right: They will talk about the following: (1) admissions criteria; (2) financial aid; and (3) student activities.
Right: The topics were leadership, motivation, enthusiasm and creativity.
Wrong: The topics were: leadership; motivation; enthusiasm; creativity.

Use a semicolon to divide two closely related independent clauses when they are not connected by a conjunction.

Right: We already received your report; the follow-up mailing is not needed.

Semicolons commonly connect two independent clauses that use conjunctive adverbs such as "therefore" and "however."

Right: We already received your report; therefore, the follow-up mailing is unnecessary.

Commas

Do not use the serial comma — that is, a comma that comes before a coordinating conjunction (such as "and" and "or") at the end of a series of three or more components. Use a comma only if the last or penultimate item itself contains a coordinating conjunction.

Right: The flag of the United States is red, white and blue.
Right: The restaurant offered pancakes, french toast, and ham and eggs.

Do not use a comma before "Jr." or "Sr." after a person's name.

Right: John Smith Jr.
Right: John Smith IV
Right: Thurston Howell III

Use a comma to introduce a complete, one-sentence quotation within a paragraph. A colon should be used to introduce longer quotations.

Right: She said, "I don't want to go."
Right: She said: "I don't want to go. I'm tired. The cat's sick, and I have no interest in postmodern art."

Do not use a comma at the start of a partial or indirect quotation.

Right: She said the play "was the finest drama Williams wrote."
Wrong: She said the play, "was the finest drama Williams wrote."

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Omit the comma before "of" in writing a person's name and address.

Right: Robert Redford of Sundance, Utah
Wrong: Robert Redford, of Sundance, Utah

Watch for missing commas. If you're using an interruptive clause or phrase with a comma at the end, make sure you've inserted the comma at the beginning.

Right: Dr. Becker, president of Georgia State University, spoke at the meeting.
Right: Executives, such as Mr. Brown and Ms. Smith, also attended.
Right: Executives such as Mr. Brown and Ms. Smith also attended.
Right: She drove from Tacoma, Wash., to Atlanta.
Right: The car, which was silver, raced down the road.
Wrong: Dr. Becker, president of Georgia State University spoke at the meeting.
Wrong: Executives such as Mr. Brown and Ms. Smith, also attended.
Wrong: She drove from Tacoma, Wash. to Atlanta.
Wrong: The car, which was silver raced down the road.
Wrong: The car which was silver raced down the road. (See "That/Which" on p. 55.)

Company Names
Follow the organization's lead, and reproduce formal titles without modification. Heed special punctuation (including ampersands), and use "Co.," "Cos.," "Inc." and "Ltd." if appropriate.

When you refer to a company without its formal title, use the term "company," not "co."

Always spell out the word "company" in theatrical organizations.

For possessives: Ford Motor Co.'s profits.

Never use a comma before "Inc." or "Ltd."

Dangling Modifiers
Avoid dangling or misplaced adverbs or adjectives.

Right: Walking across the lawn, I got mud on my shoes.
Wrong: Walking across the lawn, mud covered my shoes. (In this construction, mud is walking across the lawn.)

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Em dashes (—)
Used to set off parenthetical statements with emphasis. There should be a space on either side of each em dash.

Right: Georgia State offers more than 250 degree programs in 100 fields of study through its nine colleges and schools at the Atlanta Campus — the widest variety in Georgia.

Right: Thanks to a $22.8 million gift from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation — the largest in the university's history — Georgia State is renovating the former SunTrust Bank building at the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Park Place.

Exclamation Points
Use them rarely.

Hyphenation
Hyphenate prenominal compound adjectives — that is, two words that form a single unit that modifies a noun that follows it. In most cases, the same two words that constitute a hyphenated adjectival compound before a noun are written as two separate words when they follow the noun they modify (no matter how they're used).

Right: a six-lane highway, a highway with six lanes; a middle-class neighborhood, the neighborhood is middle class; burned-out buildings, the buildings are burned out; gender-inclusive pronouns, be gender inclusive; a bike-friendly campus, the campus is bike friendly; high-quality standards, the standards are high quality

Even if the words precede the noun they modify, do not hyphenate them if the first word is an adverb ending in "–ly."

Right: newly renovated library
Wrong: commonly-held belief

To hyphenate in a series, follow this example:

Right: He wrote 10- and 20-page papers.

When describing the score or outcome of a sports match, follow this example:

Right: Running back Taz Bateman continually powered through the line during a 34-7 rout of in-state rival Georgia Southern last December.

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Here's a short guide to commonly used open (two separate words), closed (one word) and hyphenated (two words connected with a hyphen) compounds. Always consult an *American Heritage Dictionary* to be sure.

A
all-terrain, antebellum

B
bilingual, bisexual

C
coauthor, co-chair, co-sponsor, child care, cooperative (adjective), co-op (noun), course work (noun), class work (noun)

D
database, data center, decision-maker (noun), decision making (verb), decision-making (adjective)

E
extracurricular

F
follow-up (noun), follow up (verb), full-time employee (adjective), she works full time (adverb)

fundraiser, fundraising (one word in all cases): fundraising is difficult (noun, the activity), the fundraising campaign (adjective, relating to the activity), we are holding a fundraiser (noun, event), he is a fundraiser (noun, person)

G
grade point average (neither hyphenated nor capitalized)

I
interoffice, interrelated

K
K-9 (hyphenated for a K-9 unit), K–12 (en dash for the range of grades)

L
lifestyle, long-range (adjective: the long-range plans are astounding), long range (noun phrase: the ideas cover a long range), long-term (adjective: the long-term system will be in effect for many more years)

Note: Using "long term," "long-term," "short term" or "short-term" as a

noun phrase ("we can't do anything about it in the short-term) or adverb phrase ("the results will be long term") is not standard.

M
mainframe, microcomputer, minivan, multimedia, multipurpose

N
nonprofit

O
on-campus movies (adjective), there are movies on campus each week (prepositional phrase)

P
part-time job (adjective), part time is the best option (noun), percent, playoffs, postdoctoral, postgraduate, pre-application, preschool

R
re-evaluate, reinforce

Note: In general, use a hyphen when the vowel "e" follows the prefix "re." There are exceptions. Consult the *American Heritage Dictionary* to be sure.

S
semicolon, short-term plans (adjective)

Note: Using "long term," "long-term," "short term" or "short-term" as a noun phrase ("we can't do anything about it in the short-term) or adverb phrase ("the results will be long term") is not standard.

T
time-sharing (all computer-related uses)

V
vice president, vice chair

W
world-renowned school, the school is world renowned

Y
a 3-year-old, a 3-year-old child, year-round availability (adjective)

Note: Using "year-round" as an adverb phrase ("the class is offered year-round") is not standard.

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

Quotes and Quotations

Note: *The use stipulated here prevails in the United States. The United Kingdom and Canada use different rules.*

The period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks.

Right:	She told us to "stay in school," which was good advice.
Right:	He said, "I'm going to the store."
Wrong:	He said, "I'm going to the store".

The dash, the exclamation point and the question mark go inside the quotation marks when they apply to the quote. When they apply to the whole sentence, they go outside the marks.

Right:	Sgt. Carter gave the following order: "Peel potatoes — then lights out!"
Right:	Gomer Pyle said, "Golly, Sergeant!" when he heard the news.
Right:	Francis Schaeffer's book asks, "How Shall We Then Live?"
Right:	What did Martin Luther King Jr. mean when he said, "I have a dream"?

The colon and semicolon should be placed outside quotation marks. When text ending with one of these punctuation marks is quoted, the colon or semicolon is dropped.

Right:	The president said the plan needed "a few minor adjustments"; however, he did not reject it entirely.

In running quotations, each new paragraph begins with open quotation marks, but only the final paragraph contains closing quotation marks.

Right: The speech was as follows: "Welcome, ladies and gentlemen. I have a few points to make today. The first is to thank you for this honor. My accomplishments are noteworthy only in so far as they help to advance this important field of human endeavor.

"The second is to ask you to continue thinking about this critical issue. Only through continued research and experimental programs such as the one you've recognized today will we advance our cause and improve our society.

"Finally, let me ask you to do more than turn your mental energies to this important effort. Give your total energies — in the form of financial support, volunteer time, active advocacy — for the sake of progress. Then we can all share in this special honor. Thank you."

PUNCTUATION PRIMER

When including a quote or "highlighted" word inside another quotation, use single quotation marks (') instead of double (").

Right: In his charge to the committee, the chair said, "I have often told you, 'Don't give up the ship.' Thanks to your efforts, we've been able to reach our goal."

Right: The chair said, "I have often told you, 'Don't give up the ship.'"

Spacing at End of Sentence

Use a single space at the end of a sentence and after a colon. Double spaces date back to the days of typewriters, when all characters were allotted the same amount of space. Computerized typesetting adjusts the spacing for a good fit. Extra spaces create gaps and appear unprofessional.

SENSITIVITIES

People With Disabilities

Do not focus on disability unless it is crucial to a story. Always put people first, not their disability. Emphasize abilities, not limitations. Show people with disabilities as active participants of society, and do not refer to people without disabilities as "normal."

The following incomplete list of examples is taken from "Guidelines for Reporting and Writing About People with Disabilities" (7th ed. Lawrence, Kan.: Research and Training Center on Independent Living, University of Kansas, 2008). For more information, visit rtcil.org/products/media/guidelines.

Right: person with a disability, person with ADHD, person with autism, girl who is blind or visually impaired, person with a brain injury, woman who has a brain injury, boy with an acquired brain injury, brain injury survivor, woman who is deaf or hard of hearing, person with a developmental disability, cancer survivor, burn survivor, adult with burns, person with Down syndrome, people living with HIV or living with AIDS, person with a learning disability, people with mental retardation, people with psychiatric disabilities or illnesses, people with mental disorders, person with epilepsy, person of small stature, little person, child with a speech disorder, woman without speech, a man with paraplegia, woman who is paralyzed, person with a spinal cord injury, stroke survivor, person who has had a stroke, person who is substance dependent, a man in recovery

Wrong: autistic, brain damaged, harelip, the deaf, the blind, the handicapped, the disabled, special, disfigured, burn victim, Mongoloid, AIDS victim, the retarded, slow learner, abnormal, subnormal, crazy, demented, epileptic, mute, dumb, stroke victim, alcoholic, drug addict

Ethnic Sensitivities

Always ask individual preference.

African-American/black: It's acceptable to use these terms interchangeably to describe black people in the United States. When referring to a specific individual, use the term he or she prefers.

SENSITIVITIES

American Indian/Native American: These terms are synonymous. Some indigenous people in the United States prefer "American Indian" to "Native American." It's best to use individual preference, if known. When possible, use national affiliation rather than the generic "American Indian" or "Native American," for example, Navajo, Hopi, Cherokee and so on. To specify someone who was born in the U.S. but isn't Native American, use "native-born."

Asian, Asian-American: Use "Asian" when referring to anyone from Asia, but use "Asian-American" when specifically referring to those of Asian ancestry who are American citizens.

Mexican-American, Hispanic, Latino/Latina: Use "Mexican" when referring to anyone of Mexican citizenship, and use "Mexican-American" when referring to those of Mexican ancestry who are permanent residents or citizens of the United States. "Hispanic" and "Latino/Latina" are umbrella terms referring to a person whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country, as well as residents or citizens of the United States with Latin American ancestry.

Adapted from the News Watch Diversity Style Guide.

Religious Holidays
To respect the wide variety of religious beliefs on our campus, use "holiday party" rather than "Christmas party" and "winter break" rather than "Christmas break."

Fraternities and Sororities
Use the preferred references: fraternities and sororities. The term "Greeks" or "Greek organizations" is okay. Don't use the term "frats."

Gender Sensitivities
Take a little extra time to construct your sentences so you can avoid having to use gender-specific terms. For example, by using plural pronouns ("they," "their"), you can avoid having to use the awkward but gender-inclusive construction "he or she" or "his or her."

Instead of "chairman," use "chair." Instead of "waiter" or"waitress," use "server." Instead of "mailman," use "postal carrier." It's also becoming more common to see the term "actor" used for men and women.

Sexual Orientation
gay/lesbian: "Gay" is an acceptable term for homosexuals (primarily males) but is best used as an adjective instead of a noun — for example, "gay man" as

opposed to "the gays." "Lesbian" is preferred for women. When possible, use "gay and lesbian." Where space is an issue, "gay" is acceptable to include both gays and lesbians.

gay lifestyle: Avoid this term. There is no one gay lifestyle just as there is no one heterosexual lifestyle.

gay relationships: Gay, lesbian and bisexual people use various terms to describe their commitments. If possible, ask the individual what term he or she prefers. Otherwise, "partner" is generally acceptable.

homosexual: This is the medical/clinical term for lesbians and gays. (adj.) Of or relating to sexual and affectional attraction to a member of the same sex. (n.) A person who is attracted to members of the same sex. "Gay" or "lesbian" is the preferred term in all contexts, except clinical.

LGBTQA: Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and ally communities.

Adapted from the News Watch Diversity Style Guide.

same-sex marriage: This term is preferred to "gay marriage" because it is more inclusive and technically accurate.

transgender (adj)**:** An umbrella term that refers to people whose physical, sexual characteristics may not match their gender identity. Use the name and personal pronouns that are consistent with how the individual lives publicly. When possible, ask which term the subject prefers. As a noun, use "transgender people."

TITLES

General Rules
For simplicity and clarity, put quotation marks around the titles of books, chapters of books, movies, plays, poems, songs, television shows, episodes of television shows, magazine articles, speeches, research papers and projects.

Academic Papers
The title of an academic paper or journal article should be put inside quotation marks. Italicize or underline the name of the journal.

Right: His paper, "The Rhetoric of Neo-Classic Poets," was published in *Classical Literature Quarterly.*

Books
Use quotation marks for most book titles (including common textbooks), but italicize or underline the titles of reference books, such as almanacs and dictionaries, and anthologies or other books that collect works or proceedings (including journals). Use quotation marks for book chapters or individual selections within such volumes.

Right: An excellent source for writers is "The Elements of Style" by Strunk and White.

Right: You'll find a copy of *Encyclopedia Britannica* in my library at home.

Right: My favorite selection from *The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* is "Hills Like White Elephants."

Courses
Capitalize the main words in the title of courses; quotation marks or italics are not necessary.

Magazines and Newspapers
Capitalize the name but do not place it in quotations or italics. Do not capitalize "magazine" unless it's part of the publication's title or masthead.

Right: Time magazine, Newsweek, Harper's Magazine

Capitalize the word "the" only if it's part of the periodical's title.

Right: The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, the Willamette Week

When listing several publications or periodicals, lowercase the initial "the" and eliminate additional references of "the" from the list.

Right: We read the New York Times, Daily News and Wall Street Journal every morning.

Movies, Theater, Television and Radio

Put quotation marks around the titles of movies, plays, and television and radio shows and episodes.

Right: Georgia State University alumnus Adam Pinney (B.A. '02) took home the Grand Jury Award at the 2016 South by Southwest Film Festival for his feature film, "The Arbalest."

Music

Capitalize but do not use quotation marks around descriptive titles for orchestral works. If a work has a special title, use quotation marks around it.

Right: Bach's Suite No. 1 for Orchestra
Right: Mozart's "The Magic Flute"

New terms and variations emerge rapidly. For the most part, we defer to the *Associated Press Stylebook* as our guide, but there are exceptions.

Frequently Used E-terms

dial up (verb)	log out (verb)
dial-up (adjective) account	logoff (noun)
email (no hyphen)	logout (noun)
Internet (capital "I")	multimedia (one word, no hyphen)
intranet (lowercase "i")	Net (capital "N," no apostrophe)
log in (verb)	offline (one word, no hyphen)
login (noun)	online (one word, no hyphen)

Log In

The preferred phrasal verb is "log in" — not "log on," "log onto" or "log into." Do not replace "in" with "on," "into" or "onto." Note that while it is natural to say one is "logged in" without an object, no one would ever say he or she was "logged into."

Right: Students should log in to PAWS on a regular basis.
Right: I'm already logged in.
Wrong: Use your campus ID to log onto PAWS.
Wrong: Log into BrightSpace to submit your essay.

World Wide Web Addresses (URIs and URLs)

"URL," the initialism for "universal resource locator," is often incorrectly used as a synonym for any kind of address on the World Wide Web. However, to be a URL, the address must include the appropriate protocol (access mechanism or network location), such as hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP), file transfer protocol (FTP) or lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP). A universal resource indicator (URI), on the other hand, is a broader term that includes Web addresses with or without the protocol. If you're not specifying the protocol, don't call an address a "URL."

URL: http://www.gsu.edu
URI: http://www.gsu.edu
URI: www.gsu.edu
URI: gsu.edu

When referencing Web addresses in text, write only the root domain (such as "gsu.edu" or "outlook.com") and the appropriate path (if any). Omit the protocols "http" and "https" and the abbreviation for World Wide Web ("www"), and do not include a slash at the end of the address.

Note that if your address is hosted on an alternative subdomain (such as "www2" or "www3"), you should include it. When writing for the Web, consider hyperlinking a word or phrase instead of writing out the URI.

Right: gsu.edu
Wrong: http://www.gsu.edu/
Wrong: www.gsu.edu
Right: admissions.gsu.edu
Right: admissions.gsu.edu/scholarships
Wrong: www.admissions.gsu.edu
Right: www2.gsu.edu/~wwwlrc

Web Words

Although references to the Web and Internet use an initial capital letter, these Web-based words use a lower case "w":

webcast	A live broadcast on the Web
webmaster	The creator of a site
website	A location on the Web
webzine	Media of the Web and for the Web

Common Acronyms

CC	carbon copy (BCC: blind carbon copy)
CD	compact disc (plural: CDs)
dpi	dots per inch (lower case, never spelled out)
EPS	encapsulated postscript
FAQ	frequently asked questions
FPS	frames per second
FTP	file transfer protocol
GIF	graphic interchange format
GUI	graphical user interface (plural: GUIs)
HTML	hypertext markup language
IP	Internet protocol
ISP	Internet service provider
JPEG	joint photographic experts group
LAN	local area network
OOP	object-oriented programming
RAM	random access memory
ROM	read-only memory
RSI	repetitive strain injury
TCP/IP	transmission control protocol/Internet protocol
TIFF	tagged image file format
WAN	wide area network

SOCIAL MEDIA

Georgia State University refers to the *Associated Press Stylebook* as our guide for common social media terms.

aggregator
A website or feed that amasses content from other sources and assembles it in a form digestible to its users.

API
Abbreviation for application programming interface.

app
Short for application, especially for mobile and tablet operating systems.

avatar
A version of a person that someone puts forward in an online or video game setting. It sometimes bears a strong resemblance to the user; at other times, it is used to act out fantasies of a desired identity.

blog
A website where short entries are usually (but not always) presented in reverse chronological order, with the newest entry first.

Bluetooth
A standard for short-range wireless transmissions, such as in headsets, that enable hands-free use of cellphones.

capitalization
Normal conventions of capitalization are often ignored in IM and text messages because the use of the shift key slows down letter entry.

check in
(v.), check-in (n. and adj.): When using a location-based social networking tool, such as Foursquare, the act of sharing a location via a mobile device.

click-thrus
A way of measuring how many people click a link online to see its destination site. Click-thrus are often used to set advertising rates.

cloud
The collection of data and use of related computing services via remote servers accessed through the Internet.

crowdsourcing
The practice of asking a large collection of individuals online to help gather information or produce ideas.

curate
The practice of selecting, packaging and presenting content to the public online in a more personal and hand-picked way, as opposed to automated news feeds. Often used in conjunction with social media.

direct message (DM)
A personal message sent via Twitter to one of your followers. DMs differ from mentions and @ replies in that they can only be seen by the sender and recipient.

download
To retrieve information from another server or computer.

e-book
The electronic, non-paper version of a book or publication, sold digitally and commonly consumed on an e-book reader or e-reader, such as Amazon's Kindle.

emoji
A small digital picture or pictorial symbol that represents a thing, feeling, concept and so on used in text messages and other electronic communications.

emoticon
A typographical cartoon or symbol generally used to indicate mood or appearance, as :-) and often looked at sideways. Also known as smileys.

end user
(n.), end-user (adj.): A phrase commonly referred to by technology developers when imagining the audience for an application, software or hardware. End-user experience.

e-reader
Or e-book reader.

Facebook
The world's most popular social media service. Users communicate with friends and other users via private and public messages. Posted profiles, photos, lists of personal interests and privacy settings are key elements.

feed
A stream of constantly updated material.

Foursquare
A location-based service. Users check in at certain places or businesses, collect rewards for visits and track friends who use the service.

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friend, follow, like
Acceptable as both nouns and verbs. Actions by which users connect to other users on social networks. "Friend" and "like" (formerly fan) are typically used on Facebook while Twitter users "follow" and have "followers."

geolocation
The association of your virtual location with your physical location.

geotagging
The act of adding geographical metadata to pieces of media or social media updates.

Google, Googling, Googled
Google is a trademark for a Web search engine.

Google Plus
A social network owned by Google in which users can share text updates, videos, photos or other content, and organize fellow users into circles based on relationships or other factors.

handle
A self-selected, public-facing username on a social network, particularly Twitter. May be used interchangeably with username.

hashtag
The use of a pound sign (#) in a tweet to convey the subject a user is writing about so it can be indexed and accessed in other users' feeds.

IM
Abbreviation for "instant message," sometimes used as a verb: IMing, IMed.

Internet TV
A television set that can be connected directly to the Internet and displays Web content without going through a computer.

iPad
A trademark for a brand of tablet. Use IPad when the word starts a sentence or headline. See tablet.

iPhone
Apple Inc.'s smartphone. Use IPhone when the word starts a sentence or headline.

keywords
Terms used to define an online search or embed in a file so that it becomes searchable.

LinkedIn
A social media site used mainly for professional networking. Users create contact networks for information exchanges, job searches and business opportunities.

link shortener
A tool that allows users to shorten a longer URL to make it easier to share. Bit.ly and TinyURL are two link shorteners.

live-blog
Snippets of information about a particular event that are posted online in real time, usually in reverse chronological order, with the newest entry first. Used as a noun or verb.

mashup
A combination of two or more pieces of content, such as photos or video, used to create something new. For example, a video that blends audio from a song with footage from several movies to build a new storyline.

mention
On Twitter, an @ mention tags an account in a tweet someone else is publishing. It often appears in place of the actual name. Example: I refer to the @APStylebook as I edit stories.

metadata
Data about data.

microsite
A tightly focused group of Web pages typically dedicated to a single topic, product or service.

modified tweet (MT)
A tweet amended before forwarding uses the abbreviation "MT."

Myspace
A social network site similar to Facebook.

personal message (PM)
Similar to a direct message, a personal message, often abbreviated as "PM," is a private form of communication between different members on a social media platform.

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removal of punctuation, characters
It is acceptable in instant messages and texting to remove punctuation and characters, most often vowels, to save time.

reply
On Twitter, an @ reply is a common technique used to speak to other people directly.

retweet (RT)
The practice, on Twitter, of forwarding a message or link from someone else to your followers. Users can either formally retweet to make the forwarded message appear exactly as written by the original user or use the informal convention of "RT @username:" to share the tweet and edit or add comment. Spelled out in all references, though common use on Twitter abbreviates to "RT." If you amend the tweet before forwarding, use the abbreviation "MT" for "modified tweet."

RSS
An abbreviation for Really Simple Syndication.

scraping, mirroring
The method of copying video, photo or audio content from an account and reposting it to a different one.

search engine optimization
Any of a number of methods, both informal and algorithmic, used to ensure that online content shows up in search engines such as Google, thus increasing traffic to the content. SEO is acceptable on second reference.

smartphone
An advanced mobile device, such as an iPhone, that can be used to check email, browse the Web and download applications.

social media
Online tools that people use to connect with one another, including social networks.

social media optimization
Any of a number of methods, mostly informal, used to ensure online content is shared on social networks, increasing clickthrough traffic to the originating website. "SMO" is acceptable on second reference.

social networks
Online networks such as Facebook or Twitter where people share personal and professional information and content, and connect with friends and colleagues.

status
A short string of words used on social networks to alert followers to a user's recent activities or point them to something of interest.

streaming
A method of processing and delivering media in real time over the Internet. Videos on YouTube are an example of streaming content, as are many on-demand services like Netflix and Hulu.

subscribe
A method of keeping track of public updates from Facebook users without necessarily adding them as friends. The feature must be enabled by a user to allow users to subscribe to his or her updates.

tablet
A touchscreen device, such as an iPad or Kindle Fire, that can be connected to the Internet via Wi-Fi or cellular data networks.

tag
The action of identifying someone or something in a post or piece of content. Photos are often tagged to identify people and objects in them.

text messaging, instant messaging
Terms and symbols used in text and instant messaging are increasingly showing up in quotations and regular written exchanges. Many are also used in social media updates. In one example, the numeral "2" is shorthand for "to" or "too," as in "I have something 4 U 2."

trending
Used to indicate that a particular topic is getting a lot of attention on a social network, search engine or website.

Tumblr
A blogging platform.

Twitter
A message-distribution system that allows users to post continual updates of up to 140 characters detailing their activities for followers or providing links to other content. The verb is "to tweet, tweeted." A Twitter message is known as a "tweet."

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unfollow
To remove an account from the list of accounts that populate a feed, usually on Twitter. Note that unfollowing on Twitter is a one-way action: I may unfollow you, but you may continue to follow me.

unfriend
To remove someone from a list of friends, usually on Facebook.

user interface (UI)
The features of a device, program or website that enable control by a human. "UI" is acceptable on second reference. Also called "user experience" or "UX."

VoIP
Voice over Internet Protocol. A method of transmitting sound as data over the Internet, allowing for inexpensive phone conversations. "VoIP" is acceptable on second reference.

WAP
Wireless Application Protocol. A standard that allows users to access information on mobile devices.

website
A location on the World Wide Web that maintains one or more pages at a specific address. See "World Wide Web Addresses (URLs and URIs)" and "Web Words" on pp. 44–45 for more information.

widget
A small module with a specific purpose that appears on a website, desktop or other interface and allows access to content or functions.

wiki
Software that allows a group of users to add, delete, edit and share information on an intranet or Internet website. See "crowdsourcing."

Wikipedia
An online encyclopedia whose entries are created and edited by its users, regardless of a person's expertise. May contain useful information but should not be used as a primary source.

YouTube
A video-serving network owned by Google that allows users to upload their own videos for access by anyone with a network connection.

General Rules

Alumnus/Alumni and Alumna/Alumnae
These words are taken from their Latin origins and denote graduates or former students of a school, college or university. The noun forms are gender specific: "alumna" refers to one woman; "alumnae" refers to women; "alumnus" refers to one man; "alumni" refers to men or men and women. "Alumni" is often used for any group of graduates. Restrict use of "alum" or "alums" to informal contexts or the Georgia State University Magazine.

Alumni Abbreviations
When listing alumni degrees, place last two digits of the graduation year (preceded by an apostrophe) with the degree abbreviation in parentheses. List degrees in chronological order. It is important that the apostrophe point in the correct direction: down and to the left. Do not place a comma between the year and the degree.

Right: Former State Senator David Adelman (M.P.A. '95) served as the United States Ambassador to Singapore from 2010–13.

Right: Brian Egan (B.F.A. '12) oversees programming at the Mammal Gallery, an arts and performance facility in south downtown.

If a person received more than one degree from Georgia State University, name each with its year of completion, and separate them with commas.

Right: Randy Patterson (B.B.A. '98, MBA '01) is vice president of human resources at Recall, a records management company.

Right: Joyce Mitchell (B.A. '08, M.A. '10)

Collective Nouns
Collective nouns such as "faculty," "staff," "band" and "family" can take either singular or plural verbs. Choose whichever you prefer, but stay consistent.

Right: The staff is represented by the Staff Council.

Right: Our faculty are dedicated and passionate.

Right: Staff members disagree among themselves about the best benefits options.

Passive Voice
Avoid using the passive voice, which can contribute to imprecise, weak or wordy prose.

Think about this sentence: "Jane's classes were taught in the morning." Taught by whom? Is Jane a teacher or a student? An active construction would clarify the sentence: "Professor Smith taught Jane's morning classes."

TRICKY WORDS

When a passive construction makes an appearance in an early draft, think about the sentence. Try to alter the construction and choose an active verb. Concise sentences with active verbs and a few carefully selected modifiers communicate most clearly to the reader.

    Passive: The program is activated with a key by the engineer.
    Active: The engineer activates the program with a key.

Sometimes passive voice is a better choice. For example, when the recipient of an award is more important than the awarding body, it's better to keep this information at the beginning of the sentence: "Jimmy Carter was the spring commencement speaker."

Reflexive and Intensive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns (myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves and themselves) reflect the action of the predicate back onto the subject and rename the subject as either an object or direct object. To be used correctly, they must be able to refer back to a noun or noun phrase already named in the sentence.

    Right: *I* am getting ahead of *myself.*
    Right: *I* gave *myself* three goals.
    Right: *She* hurt *herself.*
    Right: Let's examine how *the narrative* represents *itself.*
    Right: *The professors* invited *themselves.*

Intensive pronouns (the same set of words) are used in apposition to their referents to add emphasis. To be used correctly, they must be able to refer back to a noun or noun phrase already named in the sentence.

    Right: *I* told them *myself.* (*I myself* told them.)
    Right: The story emphasizes the dangers and weaknesses in *narrative itself.*

If neither of these cases applies, you must use a pronoun in either the subjective or objective case.

    Wrong: You can tell your supervisor or myself.
    Right: You can tell your supervisor or me.
    Wrong: My wife and myself express our thanks.
    Right: My wife and I express our thanks.

TRICKY WORDS

Relative Pronouns
That/Which

"That" and "which" are relative pronouns that begin relative clauses by replacing or referring to an action, idea, place or thing previously stated in the sentence.

When referring to a human being (or an animal with a name), any clause should be introduced by the word "who" or "whom." (See "Who/Whom" below.)

When referring to an object or nameless animal with an essential clause — one that cannot be eliminated without changing the meaning of the sentence — use the word "that" to introduce the clause. Essential clauses do not need commas.

When referring to an object or nameless animal with a non-essential clause — one that can be eliminated from the sentence without changing the basic meaning — use the word "which" to introduce the clause. If non-essential clauses appear in the middle of sentences, they may need to be set off by commas.

A simple test: Once your sentence is written, try reading it without the clause. If the sentence still means about the same thing, your clause should be introduced by "which." If taking out the clause changes the meaning drastically, it should be introduced by "that."

   Right: The club meeting, which was held at the University Center, was cancelled.

   Meaning: The club meeting was cancelled. (We must already know which club meeting it is.)

   Right: The club meeting that was held at the University Center was cancelled.

   Meaning: The only meeting being held at the University Center was cancelled.

   Better: The club meeting held at the University Center was cancelled.

Who/Whom

"Who" and "whom" are relative pronouns for persons. They begin relative clauses by replacing or referring to persons or animals with names either subjectively (you need to know "who" is responsible) or objectively (you need to know "whom" to contact).

The word "who" substitutes for the subjective-case pronouns "he," "she" or "they"; "whom" substitutes for the objective-case pronouns "him," "her" or

TRICKY WORDS

"them." If you don't want to use "whom," restructure your sentence. Don't just use "who" when it is incorrect.

Glossary of Preferred Terms and Commonly Misused Words

adverse/averse
"Adverse" means unfavorable. "Averse" means reluctant.

adviser/advisor
"Adviser" is preferred although both are correct. Whichever you choose to use, be consistent throughout your document.

affect/effect
"To affect" means (1) to influence, change or produce an effect; (2) to like to do, wear or use; or (3) to pretend. "To effect" means to accomplish, complete, cause, make possible or carry out. If you're looking for a noun, you're probably looking for "effect." If you're using a verb, you're safest with "affect."

afterward
not afterwards

all right
not alright

allude/refer
"To allude" means to speak of without mentioning. "To refer" means to speak of directly.

allusion/illusion
An "allusion" is an indirect reference. An "illusion" is a false impression or image.

alternate/alternative
As adjectives, "alternate" means "every other" or "happening or following in turns" while "alternative" means "available as another choice," "substitute," "existing outside traditional or established institutions or systems," or "espousing or reflecting values outside the mainstream."

alumna/ae
An alumna is one woman. Alumnae are women.

alumnus/i
An alumnus is one man. Alumni are men or men and women.

around/about
"Around" should refer to a physical proximity or surrounding ("meet me around the entrance to the University Commons") while "about" should indicate an approximation ("about 50 percent of our full-time faculty").

beside/besides
Use "beside" to mean "at the side of" ("sit beside me"), "to compare with" ("beside other studies") or "apart from" ("beside the point"). Use "besides" to mean "furthermore" ("besides, I said so"), "in addition to" ("and elm and maple trees besides") or "other than" ("there's no one here besides Bill and me").

between/among
Use "between" to show a relationship between two objects only. Use "among" when there are more than two.

"Between" takes an objective pronoun: me, her, him, them. "Between you and me" is correct. "Between you and I" is not.

biannual/biennial
"Biannual" is twice a year. "Biennial" is every two years.

CampusID
The Georgia State account name for signing into technology is a single word.

Civil Rights Movement
Capitalize each word of this proper noun.

complement/compliment
A "complement" is something that completes or supplements. A "compliment" is praise or the expression of courtesy.

compose/comprise/constitute
"Compose" is to create or put together. "Comprise" is to contain, to include all or embrace. "Constitute" is to make up, to be the elements of.

   Examples:
   The whole comprises the parts. The parts constitute the whole. The whole is composed of parts.

   The department comprises 12 people. Twelve people constitute the department. The department is composed of 12 people.

continual/continuous
"Continual" is a steady repetition. "Continuous" is uninterrupted.

TRICKY WORDS

criteria
plural (more than one criterion, which is a quality, value or standard of judgment)

curricula
plural (more than one curriculum, which is a program of academic courses or learning activities: the College of Law curricula)

curricular
adjective (College of Education & Human Development's curricular philosophy)

curriculum
singular (the chemistry curriculum)

data
"Data" is usually a plural noun that takes a plural verb ("the data have been carefully selected"). On rare occasions, "data" can be used as a singular collective noun, where the group or quantity of data is regarded as a single object that takes a singular verb ("the data is sound").

daylight-saving time
not daylight-savings time

different from/than
While "different from" is generally preferred, "different than" is acceptable in certain contexts, especially when the object is a clause. In general, use "from" when the object is a simple noun or noun phrase, but don't be afraid to use "than" before a clause. For example, "He is different from his mother," but "things are different than they used to be."

disinterested/uninterested
"Disinterested" means impartial. "Uninterested" means someone lacks interest.

dissociate
not disassociate

entitled/titled
"Entitled" means having the right to something (she is entitled to the inheritance). Use "titled" to introduce the name of a publication, speech or musical piece (the piece is titled "Love and Illusion").

farther/further
"Farther" refers to physical distance. "Further" refers to an extension of time or degree.

fewer/less
In general, use "fewer" for individual items that can be counted. Use "less" for bulk or quantity that is measured (not counted). "Fewer" usually takes a plural noun; "less" usually takes a singular noun.

first come, first served
Use the past participles of each verb. Your guests are not going to serve; they will be served.

flier/flyer
"Flier" is the preferred term for an aviator or a handbill. Use "flyer" only for the official names of buses and trains, such as Amtrak's Heartland Flyer.

flounder/founder
As a verb, to "flounder" means to move about clumsily or with difficulty, as through mud, or to behave awkwardly. To "founder," on the other hand, means to fall, fail, sink, stumble or become wrecked. People who are intoxicated or learning to swim may flounder about, but doomed companies or projects founder.

follow-up/follow up
Hyphenate the noun, and leave the phrasal verb open. You "follow up" on a meeting; the act of following up on a meeting may be called a "follow-up."

grade point average
Neither hyphenate nor capitalize this term. Heed the rules for "Acronyms and Initialisms" on pp. 10–11, and use "GPA" after first reference.

half-mast/half-staff
To use "half-mast," you must be referring to a flag on a ship or at a naval station. A flag anywhere else is at "half-staff."

healthcare/health care
While AP still prefers "health care," this term has evolved into a closed compound in some contexts, which allows writers to use it as a modifier more easily. Whatever you choose, be consistent.

historic/historical
"Historic" means important. "Historical" refers to any event in the past.

hopefully
"Hopefully" describes the hopeful manner in which someone speaks, appears or acts. Do not use "hopefully" to mean "it is to be hoped that," especially as a sentence adverb.

TRICKY WORDS

Right: I hope we can go.
Right: It is hoped the report will address that issue.
Right: She eyed the interview list hopefully.
Right: The speaker delivered her address hopefully and passionately.
Wrong: Hopefully, we can go.
Wrong: The report will hopefully address that issue.

important/importantly
"Importantly" is incorrect unless it is an adverb.

Right: He strutted importantly through the castle.
Right: More important, he said, the quality of the program must not suffer.

imply/infer
"Imply" means to suggest or indicate indirectly. To "infer" is to conclude or decide from something known or assumed.

In general, if you imply something, you're sending out a message. If you infer something, you're interpreting a message.

info
In general, use the full word "information" and restrict use of "info" to informal contexts.

in regard to
not "in regards to." "As regards" or "regarding" may also be used.

insure/ensure
"Insure" means to establish a contract for insurance of some type. "Ensure" means to guarantee.

intense/intensive
"Intense" means *of* extreme force, degree or strength whereas "intensive," as the counterpart to "extensive," means *with regard to* force or degree. A strenuous experience is "intense," but a concentrated approach to, say, agriculture or bombardment (more plants or bombs per area) is "intensive."

intro
In general, use the full word "introduction" and restrict use of "intro" to informal contexts.

irregardless
The word is "regardless" or "irrespective."

-ize
Do not coin verbs with this suffix, and do not use already coined words such as "finalize" (use "end" or "conclude") or "utilize" (use "use").

lay/lie
"Lay" means to place or deposit and requires a direct object (forms: lay, laid, laying). "Lie" means to be in a reclining position or to be situated. It does not take an object (forms: lie, lay, lain, lying).

lectern/podium
You stand on a podium and behind a lectern.

let/leave
To "let alone" means to leave something undisturbed. To "leave alone" means to depart from or cause to be in solitude.

like/as
Use "like" to compare nouns and pronouns. Use "as" to introduce clauses and phrases.

literally/figuratively
"Literally" means in an exact sense. "Figuratively" means in a comparative sense.

> **Right:**   The furnace literally exploded.
> **Right:**   He was so furious he figuratively blew his stack.

located
In most cases, you don't need this word. Instead of saying "The Speaker's Auditorium is located in Student Center East," you can simply write, "The Speaker's Auditorium is in Student Center East." Instead of "Where are you located at?" (which is the worst construction of all), write "Where are you?"

many/much
In general, use "many" for individual items that can be counted, and use "much" for bulk or quantity that is measured.

metro Atlanta
Unlike "Southern California" or "Northern Virginia," "metro Atlanta" is not a proper noun. Never hyphenate it, and avoid alternative terms like "the metro area."

> **Right:**   Georgia State boasts a $2.4 billion impact on metro Atlanta each year.

TRICKY WORDS

Wrong: Georgia State boasts a $2.4 billion impact on Metro Atlanta each year.
Wrong: metro-Atlanta, Metro-Atlanta

midnight/noon
Use instead of "12 a.m." or "12 p.m." Do not put a "12" in front of either one.

more than/over
Use "more than" when you mean in excess of; use "over" when referring to physical placement of an object, an ending or extent of authority.

Right: More than 25 professors participated.
Wrong: The university has over 60 buildings.

Nor
Use this word anytime you use "neither."

oral/verbal
"Oral" refers to spoken words. "Verbal" can refer to either spoken or written words but most often connotes the process of reducing ideas to writing.

PantherCard and PantherCash
These important resources are both written without spaces between capitalized terms.

past experience
What other kind of experience is there? Just use "experience" alone.

peddle/pedal
To "peddle" is to sell. To "pedal" is to use pedals, as on a bicycle.

people/persons
Use "person" when speaking of an individual. The word "people," rather than "persons," is preferred for plural uses in most cases.

pom-pom/pompon
"Pom-pom" is a rapidly firing weapon. A cheerleader's prop is called a "pompon."

premier/premiere
"Premier" is first in status or importance, chief, or a prime minister or chief executive. "Premiere" is a first performance.

presently/currently
Many writers use these terms as if they were synonymous. But "presently" means "in a little while" or "soon." "Currently" means now. In most cases, you can do just fine without using "currently." For example, "we are currently revising the plan" works better when simply stated, "we are revising the plan."

pretense/pretext
"Pretense" is a false show or unsupported claim to some distinction or accomplishment. "Pretext" is a false reason or motive put forth to hide the real one, an excuse or a cover-up.

principal/principle
"Principal" as a noun is a chief person or thing; as an adjective, it means first in importance. "Principle" is a noun meaning a fundamental truth, doctrine or law; a guiding rule or code of conduct; or a method of operation.

rebut/refute
To "rebut" is to argue to the contrary. To "refute" is to win the argument. For example, a sound rebuttal may refute some sloppy logic.

regardless
"Regardless" is a word. "Irregardless" is not a word.

regime/regimen/regiment
Use "regime" to denote a ruling government, a prevailing order, or a period of time during which such a government or order enjoys dominance. Use "regimen" to describe a system of dieting, exercising or therapy. Use "regiment" to refer to a military unit.

RSVP
An initialism from the French "répondez s'il vous plaît" that means "please respond." Spell in all caps without punctuation. "RSVP" is a verb phrase, so don't use it as a noun synonymous with "invitation" or "reponse" (such as "send in your RSVP"). At the same time, because it already contains an equivalent to "please," you should never write "please RSVP."

shall/will
"Shall" is used for the first-person future tense and expresses the speaker's belief regarding his or her future action or state.

If "will" is used for first-person future, it expresses his or her determination or consent. At other times, "will" is used for the second- and third-person future tense.

TRICKY WORDS

student body
Use "student" or "students" instead.

T-shirt
The "T-shirt" gets its name from its resemblance to the capital T, not the lowercase t. Do not spell out "T" as "tee."

    Right: The benefits package includes a T-shirt and a water bottle.
    Wrong: The benefits package includes a t-shirt and a water bottle.
    Wrong: The Alumni Association produced a marvelous tee.
    Wrong: tee-shirt

that/which
See "That/Which" entry on p. 55.

theater/theatre
The preferred spelling in the United States is "theater" unless the British spelling is part of a proper name, as in "The Fox Theatre" or "Alliance Theatre."

toward/towards
"Toward" is correct. "Towards" is not.

unique
Commonly overused, this word means one of a kind, without equal. "Unique" should never be modified by "truly," "rather" or "very." Either something is unique, or it isn't.

use/utilize
Use "use." "Utilize" is the awkward verb form of the obsolete adjective "utile." Why bother?

who/whom
See "Who/Whom" entry on pp. 55–56.

-wise
Do not use this suffix to coin words such as "weatherwise."

Xerox/photocopy
A trademark for a brand of photocopy machine should never be used as a common noun or verb.

Commonly Misspelled Words

This is just a small sampling to get you thinking. When in doubt, consult an *American Heritage Dictionary.*

accommodate	ecstasy	liaison
acknowledgment	embarrass	memento
aesthetics (not	exhilarate	nickel
esthetics)	foreword	occurred
antiquated	harass	occurrence
catalog (not catalogue)	hors d'oeuvres	perseverance
commitment	inadvertent	prerogative
conscience	indispensable	privilege
consensus	inoculate	proceed
counselor	insistent	sponsor
deductible	irresistible	tyrannous
dissension	judgment	vacuum
drunkenness	knowledgeable	vilify

Foreign Words

Some foreign words and abbreviations have been accepted universally into the English language: bon voyage; versus, vs.; et cetera, etc. They may be used without explanation if they are clear in the context.

Many foreign words and their abbreviations are not understood universally although they may be used in special applications, such as medical or legal terminology. If such a word or phrase is needed in a story, place it in quotation marks and provide an explanation: "ad astra per aspera," a Latin phrase meaning "to the stars through difficulty."

PET PEEVES

These words and phrases have been "done to death." Here are a few ideas for better ways to get your point across without using redundant, awkward or pretentious wording:

Weak	Better
A	
absolutely essential	essential
accompany	go with
accordingly	so
additional	added, more, other
address	discuss
adequate enough	enough
adjacent to	next to
afford an opportunity	allow, let
anticipate	expect
a large number/part	many/most
a number of	some
a variety of	many, different
appreciable	many
approximately	about
as a means of	to
at the present time	now
B	
basic fundamentals	basics
be responsible for	handle
C	
capability/capable of	ability/can
center around	center in, at or on
comes into conflict	conflicts
commitment to excellence	quality
comply with	follow
comprise	form, include, make up
concerning	about, on
constitutes	is, forms, makes up
construct	build
contact	call, write, reach
currently	omit it. It's already implied.
cutting edge	forefront, frontier
cutting-edge	leading, pioneering, progressive

Weak	**Better**
D	
designate	appoint, choose, name
determine	decide, figure, find
do not hesitate to call	call
due to the fact that	due to, since
E	
equitable	fair
evidenced	showed, shown
exhibit	show
exhibits a tendency to	tends to
F	
facilitate	ease, help
factor	reason, cause
feedback, input	opinion, reaction
foreign imports	imports
for the purpose of	to
furnish	give, send
future prospects	prospects
G	
generate	do, make, create
gives consideration to	considers
H	
head up	head
high tech	pioneering technology (or a more specific substitute)
holds a belief	believes
I	
if at all possible	if possible
impacted	affected, changed, hit
implement	carry out, do, follow
in accordance with	by, following, under
in addition	also, besides, too
in an effort to	to
in conjunction with	with
in order to	to
in the near future	soon
initiate	start, begin

PET PEEVES

Weak	Better
innovative	creative, pioneering, inventive
input	comments, advice, response

J
joint cooperation	cooperation
just exactly	exactly

K

L
legislation	law

M
makes an attempt	attempts, tries
maximize	increase, enlarge, expand, broaden
minimize	decrease, lessen, reduce
modify	change

N
necessary (pre)requisites	(pre)requisites
new innovations	innovations
numerous	many, most

O
objective	aim, goal
optimum	best, greatest, most
output	comment, idea

P
past experience	experience
personnel	people, staff
pre-planning	planning
prioritize	put in order
prior to	before
provides guidance for	guides
possibly might	might
postpone until later	postpone
purpose is to	(don't need it)

Q
qualified expert	expert

PET PEEVES

Weak	Better
R	
(in the) real world	in the world, in society, in business
real-world problem	practical issue, business (or social) issue or problem
refer back	refer
retain	keep
S	
send a communication to	notify
similar to	like
solicit	ask for
state-of-the-art	latest
T	
try and fix	try to fix
U	
unique	one of a kind (literal), exciting, new, unusual (as often used)
utilize, utilization	use
V	
viable	practical, workable
W	
warrant	call for, permit
whereas	since
wide range	many, range
wide variety	many, variety
without further delay	now, immediately
with the exception of	except for
X	
Y	
Z	

PROOFREADERS' MARKS

Instruction	Mark in Margin	Mark on Proof	Corrected Type
General			
delete	✗	delete the ~~the~~ word	delete the word
close up; delete space	◡	close the g⌣ap	close the gap
insert indicated material	*missing*	the∧word	the missing word
let it stand	*stet*	no ~~problem~~ here	no problem here
spell out	*sp*	San Diego, CA	San Diego, California
new paragraph	¶	…start of the trip. Finally, we…	…start of the trip. Finally, we…
transpose	*tr*	painted the red town	painted the town red
move left	[	[move left	move left
move right	]	m]ove right	move right
move down	⌐	move down	move down
move up	⌐	move up	move up
align	‖	‖ line up here	line up here
insert space	#	too⌃close	too close
Punctuation			
period	⊙	The end∧	The end.
comma	⊙	planes⌃trains and automobiles	planes, trains and automobile
hyphen	-	full⌃color brochure	full-color brochure
en dash	$'/_n$	2000⌃2004	2000–2004
em dash	$'/_m$	Now⌃at last!	Now — at last!
colon	⊙	the following list∧	the following list:
semicolon	;	Tom walked⌃John ran.	Tom walked; John ran.
apostrophe	'	Joe⌄s house	Joe's house
double quotations marks	"	he said∨no∨	he said "no"
single quotation marks	'	she said "Joe said∨no∨"	she said "Joe said 'no'"
parentheses	(/)	attach the zipper∨figure 12∨	attach the zipper (figure 12)
brackets	{/}	"They∨the fans∨overreacted."	"They [the fans] overreacted."
asterisk	*	word∨	word*
backslash	/	he /she	he/she
three ellipses	· ⁝ ⁝	more∧words	more…words
four ellipses	· ⁝ ⁝	more words∧	more words….
Style			
uppercase	*uc*	capital letters	Capital Letters
lowercase	*lc*	/lowercase	lowercase
small capitals	*sc*	Small Capitals	SMALL CAPITALS
italic	*ital*	Fashion magazine	*Fashion* magazine
roman	*rom*	(fancy) words	fancy words
boldface	*bold*	bold type	**bold** type
wrong font	*wf*	the (rain) fell	the rain fell

CONTACT INFORMATION

Public Relations & Marketing Communications

commkit.gsu.edu/writers-style-guide