

MERRIMACK COLLEGE

STYLE GUIDE

The Office of Communications adheres to The Associated Press Stylebook for writing in print and on the web. The AP Stylebook is available for purchase in print, via online subscription or as a web or mobile app.

Visit store.stylebooks.com for more information.

INDEX

Abbreviations _____	1
Capitalization _____	2
Confusing Words _____	3
Italics and Quotes _____	5
Merrimack Preferences _____	5
Numbers _____	6
Online Terminology _____	6
Punctuation _____	7



MERRIMACK
COLLEGE

ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms	For organizations that are commonly known by an acronym, spell out on the first reference and use the acronym thereafter. (The Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study program in Educational Leadership is designed for professionals. There are three tracks available in the C.A.G.S. program.)
Addresses	For numbered addresses, abbreviate Ave., Blvd., and St. (2 Park Ave., 20 Big Ben Blvd., 200 Main St.) For addresses without a number, spell out Avenue, Boulevard and Street. (I live on Park Avenue.) Always spell out Alley, Circle, Drive, Road, and Terrace. (I live at 20 Rodeo Drive.)
Academic Degrees	Spell out degree names, and avoid using B.A., M.A., Ph.D. in body copy; however, abbreviations are acceptable in web biographies and signatures. Use an apostrophe for bachelor's degree and master's degree, but not for associate degree. Refer to a doctorate without adding the word degree. (He holds a master's degree in biology and a doctorate in philosophy.)
Ampersands (&)	Do not use an ampersand unless it is part of a name. Instead, spell out the word and.
Days of the Week	Spell out days of the week. (Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday)
Months	When followed by a specific date, abbreviate month names that are longer than five letters. (Jan. 7, Feb. 7, Aug. 7, Sept. 7, Oct. 7, Nov. 7, Dec. 7) When not followed by a specific date, spell out the name. (February 2015 was a cold month.)
Number (No. or #)	Use No. to abbreviate number. Do not use a pound (#) sign. (No. 1)
Percent (%)	Spell out the word. Do not use the % symbol. (12 percent)
State names	Spell out a state name in running text and quotes, whether it stands alone or follows the name of a city or town. (The new history professor lives in Concord, New Hampshire.)
United States	Spell out when it's used as a noun. (He was born in the United States.) Abbreviate when it's used as an adjective. (The company's U.S. office is located in Boston.)

CAPITALIZATION

Big Data	Capitalize both words.
Bible	Capitalize when it's a noun referring to the holy book. (I read the Bible every day. I read the Gospels and the Scriptures. I read the Holy Scriptures.) Lowercase when using as an adjective and as a metaphor. (He is a biblical scholar. The AP Stylebook is my bible.)
Board of Trustees	Capitalize when referring to Merrimack's Board of Trustees. Lowercase when discussing a generic board.
Departments and Programs	Lowercase these words unless they are part of the name. (honors program, department of physics, physics department, department of English, English department)
Job Descriptions	Lowercase job descriptions. (For help with graduate programs, contact librarian Katherine Turcotte.)
Titles	For job and religious titles, capitalize only when they immediately precede a person's name. (Vice President and General Counsel Nicholas McDonald, the Rev. Billy Graham, Pope Francis) Lowercase titles that do not immediately precede a name. (Nicholas McDonald, vice president and general counsel, saw the pope in Boston.) Abbreviate the religious titles Father, Sister, and Brother. (Fr. Raymond Dlugos, Sr. Jeanmarie Gribaudo, Br. Aldo Potencio) On second reference, repeat a religious title followed by the first name only and capitalize both. (Fr. Raymond Dlugos and then Fr. Ray) <i>These Merrimack College styles are exceptions to the AP Stylebook.</i>

CONFUSING WORDS

affect/effect	<p>Affect is a verb. (The stock market's decline did not affect the portfolio's performance.)</p> <p>Effect is a noun. (The stock market's decline had no effect on the portfolio's performance.)</p>
among/ between	<p>Use among when referring to more than two. (Bryan is among the dozen people who were at the meeting.)</p> <p>Use between when referring to only two. (The manager divided the workload between Chuck and Bryan.)</p>
anxious/eager	<p>Anxious implies fear and worry. (Steven became more anxious as the date of the exam approached.)</p> <p>Eager denotes looking forward to something with excitement. (Sarah was eager to see the movie.)</p>
compliment/ complement	<p>Compliment means an expression of praise or admiration (noun) and to praise or express admiration (verb). (The professor complimented me on my performance in class.)</p> <p>When something is given free as a courtesy, it is complimentary.</p> <p>Complement means something that completes or supplements (noun) and to complete or supplement (verb). (A salad of mixed greens is the perfect complement to spaghetti and meatballs.)</p>
disinterested/ uninterested	<p>Disinterested means impartial or unbiased. (To settle the disagreement, he sought help from a disinterested mediator.)</p> <p>Uninterested means lacking interest. (He turned off the television because he was uninterested in the show.)</p>
farther/further	<p>Use farther when referring to physical distance. (Sarah lives farther from the office than Jim does.)</p> <p>Use further when referring to degree. (They decided to discuss the issue further at the next meeting.)</p>
imply/infer	<p>Imply means to suggest or hint. (Are you implying that he didn't tell the truth?)</p> <p>Infer means to deduce or conclude. (No, you inferred that from what I said.)</p>
last/past	<p>Last suggests finality. (James always seemed to be happy during his last year in college.)</p> <p>Past refers to a period of time gone by. (James has seemed happier than usual during the past month.)</p>
more important	<p>Don't use more importantly. (More important, we should practice proper grammar.)</p>

CONFUSING WORDS (cont.)

more than/ above/over	<p>More than refers to an item that can be counted. (He has more than 100 friends, and he has more cheese slices than Bryan.)</p> <p>Above and over refer to physical location. (The ball flew over the fielder's head and landed above the scoreboard.)</p>
only (and other modifiers)	<p>Be sure that modifiers such as only are placed so that they modify the intended word. (Incorrect: This promotion will only run in May. Correct: This promotion will run only in May.)</p>
proved/proven	<p>Proved is the past participle of the verb to prove. (Jim doesn't believe anything until it is proved to him.)</p> <p>Proven is an adjective and should not be used as a verb. (Steve is a proven leader among his people.)</p>
that/which/ who	<p>Use that to begin an essential clause (a clause that's not set off by commas) that would change the sentence's meaning if removed. (She has a car that stalls every time she steps on the gas.)</p> <p>Use which to begin a nonessential clause (set off by commas) that would not change the sentence's meaning if removed. (Her car, which stalls every time she steps on the gas, is old.)</p> <p>Use who when referring to a person or a group of people as the subject (not the object) of a sentence or clause. (He is the one who likes to write, and his friends are the ones who like to read.)</p> <p>However, if you're referring to a group as a unit, such as a team or a committee, then use that. (It was Bryan's team that won the game.)</p>
who/whom	<p>Use whom when linking the object (not the subject) to a verb or preposition, either directly or indirectly. (My history professor, whom everyone admires, let us out of class early today.)</p>
volleys	<p>This is the correct plural of volley (not vollies).</p>

ITALICS AND QUOTES

<p>Art, Books and Performances</p>	<p>Use quotation marks (not italics) for albums, books, computer games, lectures, movies, operas, plays, poems, radio shows, songs, speeches, TV shows, and works of art. (“To Kill a Mockingbird” is widely considered a great novel. Her lecture is titled “Building Community, Reaching for Justice: Revitalizing Massachusetts’ Immigrant Cities.” The highest-grossing movie of all time is “Avatar,” at \$2.8 billion worldwide. When visiting the Louvre, don’t forget to see Michelangelo’s “Dying Slave.” My favorite Beatles album of all time is “Rubber Soul.”)</p>
<p>Journals and Newspapers</p>	<p>Do not italicize or use quotes. (The New York Times, Annual Review of Physiology). Note that for some publications, “The” is part of the title. (The New York Times, The Boston Globe, but not the Boston Herald)</p>

MERRIMACK PREFERENCES

<p>Cities</p>	<p>These cities do not need to be followed by the state name: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington</p>
<p>College</p>	<p>Capitalize when referring specifically to Merrimack College. (Allan Weatherwax has been the College’s provost since 2017.) Lowercase when the term is used as a generic reference to higher education. (Sue is the first member of her family to attend college.)</p>
<p>Merrimack Initiatives</p>	<p>Capitalize and in some cases, italicize the names of specific Merrimack initiatives, and include a lower-case descriptor on first reference. (Initiatives include the <i>Together for Good</i> capital campaign, the <i>Agenda for Distinction</i> strategic plan, and the Warriors at Work job-preparation program.)</p>
<p>Sports Terms</p>	<p>all-star, cross-country, doubleheader, double play, free throw, goal line, halftime, home run, layup, offseason, offside, playoff (noun), postseason, power play, preseason, runners-up, slap shot, throw-in . Please note: Warriors is to be used across all genders (i.e., please do not use the term “Lady Warriors”)</p>

NUMBERS

Ages	Use numerals and hyphenate when part of a compound adjective. (The girl is 6 years old. The 6-year-old girl started first grade.)
Course Numbers	Use numerals as part of a course name. (History 6, Philosophy 209)
Rank	Use No. to abbreviate number. Do not use a pound (#) sign. (No. 1, No. 10)
Times and Dates	Use numerals and follow with a.m. or p.m., except for noon and midnight. (I can meet you at 11 a.m., noon, or 12:30 p.m.)

ONLINE TERMINOLOGY

Social Media	Spelling and capitalization for social media names and terms. (Facebook, Google Plus, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter, tweet, YouTube)
Web and Internet	Spelling and capitalization for internet names and terms. (email, Google, Googled, Google Hangout, Googling, home page, internet, intranet, myMack, the web, webcam, webcast, webfeed, webmaster, webpage, website, web address, web browser, World Wide Web)

PUNCTUATION

Commas	Don't use a comma before the conjunction in a simple series. (No ifs, ands or buts about it.)
Ellipses	Construct with three consecutive periods, and insert a space before and after. (Wait a second ... now I remember.)
Em Dashes (—)	Use to denote a suspension in a thought or to add emphasis, and insert a space before and after. (White sand, warm water and sparkling sunshine — these are the reasons they came to Hawaii.)
En Dashes (–)	Use to connect a span between numbers and words. Do not insert a space before or after. (Pages 3–5, 2/15/18–2/20/18, 10–15 percent, October–November 2018) Note: If the word from precedes the beginning of a range, then use to instead of an en dash. If the word between precedes the beginning of a range, then use and instead of an en dash. (The circus will be in town from Monday to Saturday. I plan to go to the circus between Tuesday and Thursday.)
Hyphens (-)	Use a hyphen after a prefix when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the prefix ends in a vowel and the root word starts with same vowel (re-evaluate, anti-inflammatory; exceptions are cooperate and coordinate) • the root word that follows is capitalized (pre-Renaissance) • joining double prefixes (sub-subparagraph) Don't use a hyphen after a prefix if the root word starts with a consonant. (predetermined) Use a hyphen to connect two words that form a compound adjective, but not between two words that form a prepositional phrase or other type of phrase. (The seminar was promoted as an on-campus event because it took place on campus.) <i>Exception:</i> Do not use a hyphen in a compound adjective if the first word is an adverb that ends in ly. (a highly accomplished professor, a widely used educational resource, a wholly owned subsidiary) However, if the first word is an adjective that ends in ly, then use a hyphen. (a family-owned business, the curly-haired girl)
Spaces	Insert only one space between sentences.