

# WRITING

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER.™

To present TTUHSC as a quality institution, publications and written material also must be of the highest quality. Adherence to a consistent editorial style is essential to maintaining the university's stature.

Printed materials speak with one voice, present messages clearly, and communicate our message and image precisely. Editors should exercise great care to proofread copy and to check spelling.

## WRITING STYLE GUIDE

TTUHSC uses "The Associated Press Stylebook" as its basic style guide. In certain instances, however, journalistic style is not appropriate to distinguish between "media style," which follows the Associated Press, and "publications style," which follows a more formal academic style.

In cases where the editor feels the need for other choices, an alternate may be used. If an alternative style is used, the chosen option should be followed consistently throughout the document or publication.

## TEXASTECHUNIVERSITYHEALTHSCIENCESCENTERPOSITIONINGSTATEMENT

The following paragraph presents positioning for TTUHSC:

"The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center provides creative solutions to the health care challenges of today and tomorrow. It educates a diverse group of health care professionals for successful careers; it investigates and treats complex health issues, especially those affecting historically underserved populations; and it advances knowledge through research and other innovations that touch the health of people in Texas and beyond."

This positioning can be supported in marketing and communications to different audiences by making use of the details in the proof point tables.

The Texas Tech University System comprises Texas Tech University, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at El Paso and Angelo State University. Publications should be careful to use the legal names of these components:

Texas Tech University System

Texas Tech University

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

Angelo State University

#### FIRST REFERENCE

When referring to the comprehensive organization that includes Texas Tech University, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Angelo State University, and all components of the system, use “Texas Tech University System” on first and subsequent references.

When referring to institutions individually, writers should use the full legal name on first reference.

#### SUBSEQUENT REFERENCES

Because three universities make up the Texas Tech University System, it is preferable to avoid using the word “university” alone whenever possible.

For Texas Tech University: After the first reference in print, “Texas Tech” may be used to refer to the academic campus. If the word “university” is used, it must be clear that it refers only to the academic campus. If “university” is used in this manner, use lower case letters. “Texas Tech” is acceptable on all references for Web content.

For Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center: Never use “Texas Tech” on second reference to mean the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Never use “Texas Tech Health Sciences Center” on any reference. The proper name, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, must be used on first reference. On second reference, TTUHSC may be used. TTUHSC is acceptable on all references for Web content.

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center has campuses in Amarillo, Dallas/Fort Worth, El Paso, the Permian Basin and Lubbock. Use the

word “at” and the location when referring to the campus in general, for example, “Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at Amarillo.”

For both universities: Avoid all uses of “Tech” alone as this implies a technical institution.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations like TTU or TTUHSC are permissible. Do not abbreviate the names of colleges or schools.

#### TITLES FOR INDIVIDUALS

##### ACADEMIC DEGREES

Holders of honorary degrees do not receive the title.

Use initials after a person’s full name to designate the appropriate degree, like M.D., Ph.D., R.N., M.S.N., Ed.D., etc. Certification titles like FAAN should not use periods in abbreviations. The person’s title should follow on the first reference. Using the last name alone is preferable after the first reference. For example:

Sam Jones, M.D., chair of the Department of Neuropsychiatry at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, said the appointment reflects the excellence of the faculty.

The Texas Nurses Association has named Sue Smith, R.N., Ph.D., dean and professor in the School of Nursing at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, as its 2005 Nurse of the Year.

#### CERTIFICATIONS

Certifications following a name should be avoided, particularly if they are vague to the general public. “While Jim Smith, R.N.,” is acceptable for instance, “Jane Sims, FNC,” is not because the certification is not generally recognized outside the health care profession. However, if the certification is a pertinent part of the information, then include it by writing out the certification. For example, instead of writing Alexia Green, R.N., Ph.D., FAAN, write Alexia Green, R.N., Ph.D., also is a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

No more than two titles should be used after a name.

## INSTITUTIONAL TITLES

A formal title is capitalized when it precedes a name, but is not capitalized when it follows a name. For example:

President Douglas Jones, M.D., M.S.

Earl Grey, president

“Professor” may be used as a formal title when a person holds that distinction. When the title precedes a proper name, it is capitalized and never abbreviated. When “professor” follows a proper name, it is preceded by appropriate rank, i.e., “assistant” or “associate” and is not capitalized.

## COURTESY TITLES

“Mr.,” “Mrs.,” “Miss” and “Ms.” are social or courtesy titles and should be avoided. On second reference, refer to people, men and women, by their last name only. In cases of sensitive development publications, if a courtesy title is used, always use the individual’s preference. Avoiding social titles can help lessen chances for sexism in writing.

## GROUP DESIGNATION

“Faculty” and “staff” are collective nouns that may be used in the singular or in the plural. Whether the writer chooses singular or plural, antecedents should agree.

## ABBREVIATIONS

In publications, writers and editors should avoid abbreviations wherever possible. Do not follow a school, college, department, center, institute or organization’s full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses.

In news releases, catalogs and bulletins, abbreviations may be used as long as the general public understands the abbreviations.

## NAME OF COUNTRY

U.S. is acceptable on all references for United States.

## NAMES OF STATES

In press releases, the following style should be used when state names follow a city name:

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

## MONTHS

Spell out the names of months in text material when they stand alone. The following abbreviations are used when providing a date, as in Jan. 13.

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

## BUSINESSES USE

“Co.,” “Cos.,” “Corp.” or “Inc.” for businesses that use “Company,” “Companies,” “Corporation” or “Incorporated” after their names.

Spell out the word if it falls within a business name, for example, “Aluminum Company of America.”

## TIME OF DAY

For times, use “a.m.” and “p.m.” with the hour.

Use “noon” instead of “12 p.m.”

Use “midnight” instead of “12 a.m.”

Do not use “12 noon” or “12 midnight” as these terms are redundant.

## EVENTS

Should follow “time, date, place” format.

## CAPITALIZATION

### TITLES

Use lowercase for professional titles unless they immediately precede a name. When a person is identified strictly by title on second or subsequent references, the title is not capitalized. For example:

Texas Tech’s chancellor is John Doe, who also is a medical doctor.

Sam Jones, president of Texas Tech University, spoke Friday.

President David Ray, M.D., M.S., awarded staff excellence awards Monday.

The president spoke to the Lady Raiders after the team’s win.

## DEGREES

Capitalize academic degrees as follows:

Ph.D., M.D., M.S., M.A., B.S., B.A.

Always include the periods.

Use these abbreviations only after a complete name. Do not use with only a last name.

In news releases, limit designations to only two degrees.

Generic terms for degrees are not capitalized, for example: “doctoral degree” or “doctorate,” “master’s degree,” “bachelor’s degree.” If you

are using the formal name of a degree, it is capitalized, for example: he earned a Master of Science degree from Texas Tech University.

## ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

Avoid capitalizing an academic subject when it is used as a general field of study. Capitalize academic subjects when they are part of the official title of a university entity, when they are the name of a language, and when they are the official title of a course or a short title that includes the course number. For example:

The College of Mass Communications offers programs in advertising, journalism, telecommunications and public relations.

She majored in chemical engineering and minored in Russian.

Department of Internal Medicine

School of Nursing

Area of Accounting

He teaches Sociology 3350.

## OTHER UNIVERSITY-RELATED USES

Capitalize “institute,” “center,” “program,” “division” or “office” when it is part of the formal name, but not when used alone or informally. For example:

The Center for Applied International Development Studies is a sponsor.

The center uses advanced technology in research programs.

It is appropriate to refer to a center, institute, program, division or office by the appropriate designation, in lowercase letters, on subsequent references. For example:

The International Center for Arid and Semiarid Land Studies received a major grant today. The center will use the money to a new project.

Avoid capitalizing such words as “freshman,” “senior” or “graduate” when the words refer to a stage of study or the classification of a student rather than to the group. For example:

She was a freshman, majoring in agricultural communications.

#### GOVERNMENT

Avoid capitalizing the words “city,” “government,” “federal” or “state.” For example:

United States government

federal government

the state Legislature

Texas Legislature

the state of Texas, unless referring to the state government, then State is capitalized

the city of Lubbock, unless referring to the city government, then City is capitalized

Capitalize the formal names of federal or state agencies. For example:

Texas Department of Agriculture

#### SEASONS AND LOCATION

Use lowercase for seasons. For example:

Transfer students may begin studies in the spring, summer or fall.

The spring semester begins Wednesday.

Capitalize “west” and other compass points when referring to a region. For example:

In architecture and lifestyle, Texas Tech University reflects the American West.

The people of West Texas were determined to have their own university.

Use lowercase for compass points when indicating a direction. For example:

Many students travel west to the recreation areas of New Mexico.

#### NUMBERS

##### GENERAL USE

Spell out numbers one through nine and first through ninth.

Use figures for numbers 10 and greater. Also use figures to refer to a numerical ranking, a unit of scientific measurement, a percentage or a unit of money. For example:

Two

10th

No. 1

1,040

300

45 kg

10

\$5 million

5 percent

7 degrees Celsius or Fahrenheit

##### STARTING A SENTENCE

Always spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence. A better approach is to rewrite the sentence to avoid using a number at the beginning. For example:

INSTEAD OF: Eight hundred and eighty five architecture majors are included in Texas Tech University’s total enrollment of 28,000.”

TRY: Of Texas Tech’s total enrollment of 28,000 students, 885 are architecture majors.

##### PERCENTAGES, FRACTIONS, LARGE NUMBERS

Use numerals for percentages and spell out percent. For example:

90 percent

3 percent

Spell out fractions in text material. Hyphenate fractions when they are used as adjectives or adverbs. For example:

The book is three-fourths complete.

Use a comma in numerals of 1,000 and above except for temperatures, years, street addresses, broadcast frequencies, room numbers, serial numbers and telephone numbers. For example:

2,354

3818 degrees Celsius

2000 B.C.

806-742-2011

#### PUNCTUATION

##### SERIAL COMMA

A comma is not required before “and” or “or” in a series of three or more items unless it improves clarity. For example:

Required courses include English, history and economics.

Women’s sports now include basketball, softball, golf, tennis and soccer.

Will you take your tests on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday?

The departments of surgery, OB-GYN, and family and community medicine will have representatives at the job fair.

##### COMMAS AND MULTIPLE ADJECTIVES

Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives equal in rank preceding a noun. For example:

The summer was a long, hot season. (equal)

She wore a cheap wool coat. (unequal)

##### COMMAS IN DATES

Use commas in full dates, but not between month and year or season and year. A comma also should follow the year when used with a month and day in the middle of a sentence. For example:

The building will be completed in July 2004.

He was on sabbatical during summer 2001.

Nov. 22, 1963

June 6, 1944, was D-Day.

##### COMMAS IN NAMES

Associated Press style requires that a comma not be used to separate a name and “Jr.” or “Sr.” or a name and a numeral. For example:

John D. Rockefeller III

##### HYPHENATION

Hyphenate compound words used as adjectives, but not those that include an adverb ending in -ly. For example:

The player scored a first-quarter touchdown.

She has a full-time job in the Department of Surgery.

The newly appointed director started in January.

##### APOSTROPHE FOR POSSESSION

Use the apostrophe to indicate possession. Note however, that “its” is a possessive pronoun that lacks an apostrophe. “It’s” is a contraction of “it is.”

##### APOSTROPHE FOR PLURALS

When words designate a word, do not use ’s (apostrophe s) to indicate plural. For example:

No ‘ifs,’ ‘ands’ or ‘buts.’

Plurals of figures add an s not an ’s (apostrophe s). For example:

1920s

727s

low 20s

For plurals of single letters, use 's: For example:

Mind your p's and q's

Three R's

Four A's and a B

For plurals of multiple letters, including acronyms, add s. For example:

ABCs

IOUs

VIPs

#### COMPOSITION TITLES

Composition titles are the names of books, movies, operas, plays, poems, songs, television programs, lectures, speeches, works of art, etc. Associated Press style requires that these titles are enclosed in quotation marks and are never italicized.

#### QUOTATION MARKS

Do not use quotation marks, bold font, underline or italics casually or for emphasis.

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks.

Question marks and exclamation marks go inside if they are part of the quoted material.

Dr. Jones said, "It was a great day for everyone."

"I understand the directions," he said.

Have you seen "Harvey"?

The senator asked the nervous lobbyist: "Can you tell me that you honestly did not know the answer?"

"Said" should always be used when quoting or paraphrasing a source. If quoting a publication, use "according to."

#### EXCLAMATION MARKS

Avoid exclamation marks for emphasis. Use them only sparingly for emotion or a strong feeling.

#### GENERAL STYLE

##### PREFERENCES AND VOICE

The following words have more than one spelling. These are preferred versions:

Acknowledgment

Adviser

Judgment

Percent

Counselor

Catalog

Health care

'Orthopaedics' when in reference to the TTUHSC Department of Orthopaedics. For all other references, use 'orthopedics.'

Always write out "and" unless an ampersand (&) is used in an official name or title.

For publications, the names of companies and corporations that support Texas Tech University System programs should be spelled as they appear on their letterhead or corporate statements. Punctuation separating "Inc." should follow Associated Press style and not be used. For example:

E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. Inc.

When referring to equipment that has been donated to the university or university system, give the proper trade name and spell the company correctly. For example:

Microsoft Windows software



Avoid redundancies. For example:

INSTEAD OF: most unique

USE: unique

Avoid passive voice. For example:

INSTEAD OF: The increase in salaries was approved by the Board of Regents.

TRY: The regents approved the increase in salaries.

Avoid beginning sentences with “There are” and “It is.”

In formal writing, avoid first person (I, we) and second person (you).

In less formal documents, first and second person sometimes may be used to create a more personal tone.

#### DIVERSITY

Every effort should be made to include women and minorities in photographs and copy. Access for persons with disabilities is often best illustrated in photographic images.

#### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LANGUAGE

It is recommended that publications and letterhead from the Texas Tech University System, Texas Tech University and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center should include some form of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action statement.

At a minimum, it is recommended that you use: “An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution” on your publications.

*For other wording, or for questions, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at (806) 742-3627.*

#### TERMINOLOGY

Re-read copy carefully to avoid racist, sexist or insensitive implications.

“Handicapped,” “disabled” and “impaired” should be used carefully and only when clearly pertinent and appropriate for your material. Keep in mind the following meanings and choices:

Disabled is a term describing an individual’s ability to do something independently.

Impaired implies difficulties in handling certain tasks.

Handicapped should be avoided to describe a disability. The best way to describe disabled individuals is “persons with disabilities.”

#### RACES AND ETHNICITIES

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races and tribes. For example:

Arab	Lakota	Mexican American
Arabic	Eskimo	Caucasian
African-American	Hispanic	Cherokee
Japanese	Jewish	Chinese
Asian	Latin American	

Lower case “black,” “white” and other racial designations, whether used as adjectives or nouns.

*For questions, please contact the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at (806) 743-1522.*

#### GENDER-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Writers of Texas Tech University System publications should avoid suggestions that programs and aspects of general university life are limited to or directed at a specific gender.

Do not use “he” when the intent is “he or she” or “she or he.” For example:

INSTEAD OF: A student applying for financial aid should file his application for admission by Jan. 1.

TRY: Students applying for financial aid should file their applications for admission by Jan. 1.

INSTEAD OF: The student must have an overall grade-point-average of at least 3.0 to satisfy the requirements of his school.

TRY: A 3.0 grade-point-average is required to satisfy the requirements of the school.

Though “he or she” or “he/she” may be used occasionally, careful attention to writing will avoid awkward language and the over-use of these terms.

In some cases, the male and female references can be alternated. In other cases, no gender-specific word need be used at all.

#### PROPER GENDER USE

When reference to a specific gender is necessary, “men” and “women” generally are the preferred titles. For example:

Texas Tech University men may belong to several Greek and service organizations.

Texas Tech University women have built an enviable reputation on the basketball court.

Sigma Theta Tau is the international honor society for nursing. Membership is open to men and women, by invitation, based on high academic achievement.

Sometimes “male” and “female” may be appropriate. For example:

Male students are housed in Sneed Hall, while females occupy Horn and Knapp halls.

Numbers of female faculty are increasing.

“Boys” and “girls” properly refer to children.

“Alumnus” (“alumni” in the plural) refers to a man who has attended a college or university. “Alumna” (“alumnae” in the plural) refers to a woman who has attended a school. “Alumni” is the correct Latin plural for use when referring to both men and women who have attended a school.

#### MORE INFORMATION

*If you have questions about style, refer to “The Associated Press Stylebook” or contact the Office of Communications and Marketing at (806) 743-2143.*



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
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