EDITORIAL STYLEBOOK

Tips, tricks and terms for writing about higher education in Florida
Board of Governors
State University System of Florida

Editorial Stylebook

The Board of Governors follows the guidelines in the Associated Press Stylebook for communications intended primarily for external audiences, unless otherwise noted. For questions, contact Communications Director Kim Wilmath at kim.wilmath@flbog.edu or 850-245-9724.

Key guidelines:
● Start with action. Think news.
● Omit needless words.
● Scrutinize adjectives.
● Avoid exclamation points!
● Eliminate jargon.
● Proofread, proofread, proofread.

Definitions and Uses A-Z

abbreviations: A few universally recognized abbreviations are required in some circumstances, and some others are acceptable depending on context. But in general, avoid alphabet soup. Do not use abbreviations the average reader would not immediately recognize. Some examples:
● Before a name: Abbreviate the following when used before a full name outside direct quotations: Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., the Rev., Sen. and certain military designations.
● After a name: Abbreviate Jr. or Sr. after an individual’s name. Abbreviate company, corporation and incorporated when used after the name of a corporate identity as Co., Corp., and Inc.
● With dates or numerals: Use the abbreviations A.D., B.C., a.m., p.m., No. (for number), and abbreviate certain months when used with the day of the month.
● In numbered addresses: Abbreviate avenue, boulevard and street: He lives on Pennsylvania Avenue. He lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
● Avoid awkward constructions: Do not follow an organization’s full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be obvious on second reference, do not use it.

academic degrees: Use bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctoral degree or doctorate in place of degree abbreviations. Also acceptable: Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science, etc. Use abbreviations only when needed to distinguish the specific type of degree or when the use of full terms would be cumbersome. To abbreviate, use periods between letters, such as B.A.
(Bachelor of Arts), M.A. (Master of Arts), M.S. (Master of Science). For degrees with three or more capital letters, such as MBA, omit periods. The word degree does not follow a degree abbreviation. Note: associate degree is not possessive.

**academic departments:** Capitalize as part of an official name as in Department of Political Science and Department of History, but lowercase when referring to them generically as in the political science department and history department.

**academic titles:** Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as president, provost, vice president, chancellor, dean and chairman when they precede a name: President Smith, Provost Jones. Lowercase elsewhere. Never abbreviate professor.

**Accents:** Use tildes and other accent marks when spelling proper names and other words as needed. Press control and apostrophe keys while typing the vowels for á, é, í, ó and ú. For ñ, press the Alt key and type numbers 164 on the right side of the keyboard. For ü, type Alt 0252.

**addresses:** Abbreviate only Ave., Blvd. and St. and only with a numbered address: He drove to 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: I walked down Pennsylvania Avenue. Lowercase the type of roadway and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: The city will repave Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues. Always use figures for an address number: Deliver this to 123 Morningside Circle. Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names. Use figures with two letters for 10th and above: 703 Fifth Ave. or 325 21st St. Abbreviate directions: 222 E. 42nd St., 562 W. 43rd St., 600 K St. N.W. Do NOT abbreviate if the number is omitted: East 42nd Street, West 43rd Street, K Street Northwest.

**administration** Lowercase and spelled out unless part of a proper name. Do not use admin.

**adviser, advisor:** Adviser is preferred. Advisor is acceptable for non-news uses.

**affect, effect:** Each is a verb and a noun. In practice, however, affect is almost always a verb and effect most often a noun: drugs that affect the nervous system; the effect of drugs on the nervous system; his complaint had no effect on the dean.

**afterward:** Not afterwards.

**ages:** Always use figures. When the context does not require ‘years’ or ‘years old’, the figure is presumed to be ‘years.’ Ages expressed as adjectives before nouns or as substitutes for nouns use hyphens: A 5-year-old boy, but the boy is 5 years old. The boy, 7, has a sister, 10. The woman, 26, has a daughter 2 months old. The law is 8 years old. The race is for 3-year-olds. The woman is in her 30s (no apostrophe).
alma mater: Lowercase.

alumni association: Capitalize if part of proper name: UF National Alumni Association, lowercase on second reference: the alumni association, the association.

alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae: Use alumnus (alumni in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school or in non-gender specific instances. Use alumna (alumnae in the plural) for references to a woman. Use alumni when referring to groups of men and women. Do not use alum.

a.m., p.m.: Lowercase and use periods. Don’t be redundant (not 8 a.m. this morning)

American College Test: ACT on second reference, though ACT is acceptable for charts, tables and for all references in documents intended for internal or academic audiences

among, between: Generally, between refers to two items, and among refers to more than two. Do not use amongst.

annual: An event cannot be described as annual until it has been held in at least two successful years. Do not say first annual. Instead, note that organizers plan to hold an event annually.

association: Do not abbreviate. Capitalize as part of a proper name: American Medical Association.

Association of American Universities: On second reference use AAU or the association. UF is one of 62 universities in the AAU (60 in the United States, two in Canada).

because, since: Use because to denote a cause-effect relationship: He went because he was told. Since describes time. I haven’t seen her since last year because she was out of the country.

biweekly: Biweekly means every other week. Semiweekly means twice a week.

board: Capitalize only when part of a proper name: Board of Governors. Lowercase on second reference: the board met Wednesday.

Board of Governors: Established in the Florida Constitution by voter referendum in 2002. The board has 17 members, 14 of whom are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Florida Senate for seven-year terms. Other members are the chair of the Advisory Council of Florida Senates, the Commissioner of Education and the chair of the Florida Student Association. Responsibilities include defining the distinctive mission of each institution and managing the system’s coordination and operation. The board appoints a chancellor who serves as the system’s chief executive.
Always capitalize when using full title Board of Governors, lowercase board on second reference. Avoid the use of BOG except in tables or charts. Do not use Gov. as a title for Board of Governors members except in internal communications. Instead, use member: Board of Governors member Tom Kuntz. If referring to the chair, capitalize title if before the name: Board of Governors Chair Dean Colson.

**Board of Regents**: Managed the State University System from 1965 to 2001. Replaced by the Board of Governors in 2003, following the passage of a constitutional amendment in 2002.

**boards of trustees**: Lowercase unless referring to a specific board of trustees, such as the Florida State University Board of Trustees. Never use BOT or UBOT. Members are trustees, lowercased. Each state university has a 13-member board responsible for budgeting, implementing programs and maintaining education standards. The governor appoints six members and the Board of Governors appoints five; all are subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate and serve five-year terms. The remaining members are the chair of the university’s Faculty Senate or its equivalent, and the Student Government president of the university, which each serve for one year. NOTE: Capitalize trustee when used with a name in ceremonial or internal documents: The Board of Governors hereby recognizes Trustee Smith for her dedication.

call letters: Use all caps. Use hyphens to separate the type of station from the basic call letters: WUFT-TV, WUFT-FM.

campuswide: One word. Also citywide, countywide, statewide, nationwide, systemwide and worldwide. NOTE: university-wide requires a hyphen.

can, may: Can indicates ability to do something; may is used to ask, grant or deny permission to do it. The board can change that regulation, though it may choose not to.

capital, capitol: A capital is the city where a seat of government is located: Tallahassee is the capital of Florida. A capitol is the building in which state and federal legislative bodies meet. Capitalize Florida Capitol when referring to the building in Tallahassee: We just returned from a meeting at the Capitol with the governor.

capitalization: In general, avoid unnecessary capitalization. Use for proper nouns. Capitalize formal titles when used immediately before a name. Lowercase when titles are used alone or when set off from a name by commas.

catalog: Not catalogue.

chair: Not chairman, chairwoman or chairperson. Capitalize before a name: Board of Governors Chair Dean Colson. Lowercase in all other uses: Dean Colson, chair of the Board of Governors.

classes, courses: Lowercase when referring to courses and classes: I took a fine arts class and a business class. Uppercase if referring to specific name of a class or if the class uses a proper noun or numeral: I took Psychology 2000 and Spanish 1000.

classroom: One word.

c-o- : Retain the hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status:

- co-author
- co-pilot
- co-chairman
- co-respondent (in a divorce suit)
- co-defendant
- co-signer
- co-host
- co-star
- co-owner
- co-worker
- co-partner

Do not hyphenate in the following instances:

- cooperate
- coeducational
- cooperative
- coequal
- coordinate
- coexist
- coordination
- coexistence

coed: Never use to refer to a female college student.

collective nouns: Collective nouns, such as faculty and staff, can be singular and plural: the French faculty meets regularly with the other language faculties; the staff sometimes disagree among themselves.

college: Capitalize when part of a university’s formal name for a specific college: College of Architecture. Lowercase on second reference or in plural uses. The colleges will have commencement ceremonies on Saturday. Avoid use as a synonym for university, in the interest of avoiding confusion with Florida’s 28 state colleges.

commencement: Preferred term for the graduation ceremony.

committees, task forces, commissions: Capitalize names of specific committees and task forces: Commission on Florida Higher Education Access and Degree Attainment, Select Committee on Florida Polytechnic University. Lowercase second references: the task force selected the guest speakers.
company, companies: Consult the company or Standard & Poor’s Register of Corporations if in doubt about a formal name. Do not use a comma before Inc. or Ltd.

composition titles: Apply these guidelines to book titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, song titles, television program titles, titles of lectures, speeches and works of art.

- Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters: The Star Spangled Banner.
- Capitalize an article (the, a, an) or a word of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title: “Of Mice and Men”.
- Put quotation marks around the names of all such works except books that are primarily catalogs or reference material, including almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks and similar publications: Encyclopedia Britannica.


courtesy titles: In general, do not use the courtesy titles Miss, Mr., Mrs., Ms.

curriculum vita A summary of one’s personal history and professional qualifications. Plural is curricula vitae.

datelines: Datelines on news releases should contain a city name in all capital letters. If outside Florida, use AP style for state abbreviations. A dateline should tell the reader where the writer obtained the information.

data: This can be used as a singular mass noun in which the word information could be easily substituted Much of this data (or information) is useless because of its lack of specifics. It can also be used as a plural count noun in which the word facts could be substituted: Many of these data (or facts) are useless because of their lack of specifics.

dates: Spell out days of week and months without dates: September 2010. Abbreviate months with dates: Sept. 1, 2000, except for March, April, May, June and July. Never use a comma between month and year when a specific date is not mentioned. The same is true for seasons: fall 1991. A comma should follow the year when a specific date is given: Feb. 8, 1990, was the date mentioned.

days of the week: Do not abbreviate, except when needed in tables and charts: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat. Use three letters, without periods, to facilitate tabular composition.

days, months, years: Except for first reference in a news release, do not use date for an upcoming or past event if it is within a week of the news release date: The concert will be held Thursday, not Thursday, Jan. 10 (if the release is dated Tuesday, Jan. 8). Likewise, do not use the year if it is within a year of the release date. Do not use ‘on’ with dates when its absence would not
lead to confusion: the program ends Dec. 15, not the program ends on Dec. 15. Do not use st, th, nd or rd with dates: submit applications by Oct. 14, not Oct. 14th. Use ‘s’ without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: UF became coed in the 1940s. Use apostrophe for class years: She belonged to the Class of ’72.

dean’s list: Lowercase: He is on the dean’s list.

department, division, center: Capitalize as part of a formal name. Lowercase for other uses. Department of Philosophy, the philosophy department.

dimensions: Use figures and spell out inches, feet, yards, etc., to indicate depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate as compound modifiers: He is 5 feet 6 inches tall, the 5-foot-6-inch man.

directions, regions: In general, lowercase north, south, northeast, northern, etc., when they indicate compass direction; capitalize when they designate regions. Examples:

- Compass directions: He drove west.
- Regions: A storm system that developed in the Midwest is spreading eastward. The North was victorious. She has a Southern accent.
- With states and cities: The preferred form is to lowercase compass points only when they describe a section of a state or city: western Ohio, southern Atlanta. But capitalize:
  ○ When part of a proper name: North Dakota, West Virginia.
  ○ When used in denoting commonly known sections: Southern California, South Florida, West Texas, the South Side of Chicago, the Lower East Side of New York. If in doubt, use lowercase.

director: Lowercase in most uses.

diseases: Do not capitalize arthritis, emphysema, leukemia, migraine, pneumonia, etc. When a disease is known by the name of a person identified with it, capitalize the individual’s name: Bright’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease.

doctor: For news releases, use Dr. in first reference as a formal title only before the name of an individual who holds a doctor of medicine, doctor of dental surgery, doctor of optometry, doctor of osteopathy, or doctor of podiatric medicine degree.

doctoral, doctorate: Doctoral is an adjective; doctorate is a noun. He earned his doctoral degree. He earned his doctorate.

dollars: Always lowercase. Use figures and the $ sign in all except casual references or amounts without a figure. For amounts of more than $1 million, use the $ and numerals up to two decimal places: $23.55 million.
drop/add: A period of time at the beginning of a semester when students may drop or add classes without penalty. Use backslash (/) with no spaces.

E&G: Education and General funding is appropriated by the Legislature to support universities’ general academic and operating expenses. Avoid use in news releases, but when unavoidable, spell out and explain on first reference. E&G is acceptable for all references in documents intended for internal or academic audiences.

ellipsis: Use an ellipsis (…) to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts and documents. Avoid if possible.

e-mail: Acceptable in all references. Note lowercase ‘e’ and no hyphen. Other examples: e-commerce, e-trading, e-retailing. When writing email addresses use all lowercase and a period at the end of a sentence.

emeritus, emeriti, emerita: This word often (but not always) is added to formal titles to denote individuals who have retired but retain their title. When used, place emeritus after the formal title. Capitalize if before a name, lowercase if after: Professor Emeritus Samuel Eliot Morison or Samuel Eliot Morison, professor emeritus of history.

faculty: Lowercase unless part of name or title.

FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid must be completed by any student seeking to obtain a Pell Grant, student loans or other financial aid through a university. Spell out on first reference.

farther, further: Farther refers to physical distance: He walks farther into the woods. Further refers to an extension of time or degree: She will look further into the mystery.

FCAT: Acceptable in a lead, but spell out Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test in the news release text.

fewer, less: In general, use fewer for individual items, and less for bulk or quantity: I had less than $50 in my pocket; however, I had fewer than 50 dollar bills in my pocket.

Florida Student Association: Student advocacy group comprised of student leaders from across the State University System. The president of this group holds the student seat on the Board of Governors, per the Florida Constitution. Use FSA or the association on second reference.
fractions: Spell out amounts less than one in news releases, using hyphens between the words: two-thirds, four-fifths, seven-sixteenths, etc. Use figures for precise amounts larger than 1, converting to decimals whenever practical.

full time, full-time: Hyphenate only as a compound modifier: He works full time. She is a full-time student.

fundraising, fundraiser: One word in all cases.

good, well: Good is an adjective that means something is as it should be or is better than average. The soup smells good. When used as an adjective, well means suitable, proper, healthy. When used as an adverb, well means in a satisfactory manner or skillfully: a machine that runs well; he did well on his entrance exam.

Gordon Rule: State law requiring undergraduates to complete designated communication and computation courses. Capitalize.


governor: Capitalize and abbreviate when before a name: Gov. Rick Scott. Without a name, lowercase: The presidents greeted the governor. Do not use Gov. as a title before Board of Governors members, except in internal communications. In news releases, use the title of member: Board of Governors member Tom Kuntz. If referring to the chair, capitalize if before the name: Board of Governors Chair Dean Colson.

GPA: Acceptable abbreviation in all references for grade point average.

Grades: Place single quotation marks around grade letters: She earned an ‘A’ in history. She earned all ‘A’s. Graduate Record Examination: GRE on second reference.

graduate school: Lowercase unless part of a university’s formal title for its graduate school: The student intends to pursue graduate school. The Graduate School at the University of Florida is offering a scholarship.

groundbreaking: One word without hyphen for both the adjective and the noun: a groundbreaking discovery, a groundbreaking for the new clinic will be held Friday.

health care: Always two words, no hyphen.

high-tech: Hyphenated.
**historical periods**: Capitalize names of historical periods, spell out first through ninth centuries, use numbers for 10th and above with century in lower case: the Renaissance, Baroque music, the 21st century.

**Homecoming**: Capitalize when referring to a university’s annual event. Lowercase in other cases.

**home page**: Two words.

**honors**: Lowercase unless part of a proper name. Also lowercase *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*.

**instructor**: A non-tenured faculty rank. Lowercase in all uses.

**interim**: Capitalize if before a name, lowercase in general use: Interim President Larry Robinson.

**intermural, intercollegiate, intramural**: Competitive teams from different universities are *intermural* or *intercollegiate*. Competitive teams at a single institution are *intramural*.

**intra-office**: Several areas within one office or area.

**judgment**: Note spelling. Not judgement.

**land–grant university**: The Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1862 granted federally controlled land to states to establish agricultural and mechanical arts universities. The State University System’s land grant institutions are UF and FAMU. Capitalize if part of formal title, lowercase elsewhere. Hyphenate if used as a compound modifier: UF is a land–grant institution.

**legislative titles**: Use Rep., Reps., Sen. and Sens. as formal titles before one or more names. Spell out and capitalize before one or more names in a direct quotation. Spell out and lowercase representative and senator in other uses. Spell out other legislative titles in all uses. Capitalize formal titles such as *assemblyman, assemblywoman, city councilor, delegate*, etc. when they are used before a name. Lowercase in other uses.

**legislature**: Capitalize when preceded by the name of a state: the Florida Legislature. Retain capitalization when the state name is dropped but the reference is specifically to that state’s legislature. But do not capitalize legislative, legislator, etc., unless part of a formal title.

**like, as**: Use like as a preposition to compare nouns and pronouns. It requires an object: Jim blocks like a pro. The conjunction as is the correct word to introduce clauses: Jim blocks the linebacker as he should.
like, such as: Like means similar to but not including. While ‘like’ is used in everyday speech to list examples, ‘such as’ is preferred: Vegetables, such as carrots, lettuce, and cucumbers, are part of a healthy diet.

long term, long-term: Hyphenate only as a compound modifier: He has a long-term assignment. We will win in the long term.

ly, (-ly): Do not use a hyphen between adverbs ending in -ly and adjectives they modify: an easily remembered rule, a badly damaged island, a fully informed woman.

magazine names: Capitalize the name but do not place it in quotes and don’t italicize. Lowercase magazine unless it is part of the publication’s title: Harper’s Magazine, Newsweek magazine, Time magazine. When in doubt, consult the masthead.

majors, programs: Do not capitalize majors, programs, specializations or concentrations when they are not part of a designated degree: She majored in economics. She received a Bachelor of Arts in History. See academic degrees.

media: When used as a subject, media always takes a plural verb: The news media are often the target of public criticism.

millions, billions: Use figures with million or billion except in casual uses: The nation has 1 million citizens. I’d like to make a billion dollars. I need $7 billion. Do not go beyond two decimals: 7.51 million persons, $2.56 billion. Decimals are preferred where practical: 1.5 million not 1½ million. Do not drop the word million or billion in the first figure of a range: He is worth from $2 million to $4 million, not $2 to $4 million (unless you really mean $2). Note that a hyphen is not used to join the figures and the word “million” or “billion,” even when used as a compound modifier: The president submitted a $300 billion budget.

months: Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone. When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas: January 1972 was a cold month. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas: Feb. 14, 1989, was the date.

more than: More than relates to quantity. Over is spatial. There are more than 330,000 students in the State University System. The plane flew over the building.

multi: The rules in prefixes apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:

- multicolored
- multimillion
- multilateral
• multimillionaire
• multidisciplinary

NCAA: Acceptable acronym for National Collegiate Athletic Association in all references.

National Education Association: NEA or the association on second reference.

newspaper names: Don’t use quote marks around the name. Capitalize ‘the’ in a newspaper’s name if it’s in the masthead. Lowercase ‘the’ before newspaper names if listing several papers, some of which use ‘the’ as part of the name and some of which do not.

non-: The rules of prefixes apply, but in general no hyphen when forming a compound that does not have special meaning and can be understood if not is used before the base word. Use a hyphen, however, before proper nouns or in awkward combinations: non-nuclear. Follow Webster’s New World Dictionary.

noon, midnight: To avoid confusion, use noon or midnight rather than 12 p.m. or 12 a.m.

numbers: Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence, with one exception – a year: 1968 marked a turning point in the Vietnam War. Spell out numbers below 10. Use figures for 10 and above: They had 10 dogs and four cats. When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in ‘y’ to another word; do not use commas between other separate words that are part of one number: twenty, twenty-one, one hundred forty-five.

on campus, on-campus: ‘On-campus’ hyphenated is a modifier: Students live in on-campus housing. ‘On campus’ describes location: She has a job on campus.

online: One word in all cases, not hyphenated.

organizations and institutions: Capitalize full names of organizations and institutions: American Medical Association; General Motors Corp.; Harvard University; Harvard University Medical School; Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

page numbers: Capitalize page when used with a number: Page 56.

people, persons: Use person when speaking of an individual: One person waited for the bus. The word people is preferred to persons in plural uses. Persons should be used only when it is in a direct quote or part of a title: Bureau of Missing Persons. People also is a collective noun that takes a plural verb when used to refer to a single race or nation: The American people are united. In this sense, the plural is peoples: The peoples of Africa speak many languages.
percent: Spell out, except in headlines, tables or charts. Always use numerical figures with percents.

Ph.D., Ph.D.’s: The preferred form is to say a person holds a doctorate and name the individual’s area of specialty. See academic degrees.

phenomenon, phenomena: Note the plural.

phone numbers: Always include the area code and do not place in parentheses. Use hyphens: 850-245-9724. When listing an extension within an office, write the number followed by a comma, a space, “ext.” and the number: 850-245-0466, ext. 9724

postdoctoral, postgraduate: No hyphens

premier, premiere: A premier is the top leader in a government or an adjective meaning the first in importance or rank: He was the premier artist of his genre. A premiere is the first performance of a play, concert or movie

president, president’s office: Capitalize if used as before a name or as an official title of a university’s President’s Office: USF President Judy Genshaft. Lowercase if after a name or in general uses: The students vowed to visit every university president’s office in the state of Florida.

principal, principle: Principal means most important, first ranked, authority: The school has a new principal. She is the principal researcher in that discipline. Principle means a basic truth or law: The Student Creed helps students understand the university’s principles.

professor: Lowercase before a name. Do not abbreviate.

programs: See majors.

pro tempore: Capitalize before a name: He talked with President Pro Tempore John Doe.

proved, proven: Proved is the past tense of prove. Proven is an adjective. He proved the theory. He took a proven course of action.


quotation marks: The period and comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, the semicolon, the question mark and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only, outside if not.
race: Capitalize specific names of races and ethnic groups: Caucasian, Hispanic, African American. Lowercase black and white.

ratios: Use figures and hyphens: the ratio was 2-to-1, a ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio. The word “to” should be omitted when the numbers precede the word “ratio”. Always use the word “ratio” or a phrase such as a 2-1 majority to avoid confusion with actual figures.

registrar: Capitalize if with an official organization name: Office of the University Registrar. Use the registrar’s office on second reference or in non-specific use.

registration: Lowercase.

researcher: Do not capitalize in title preceding a name.

residence halls: Preferred term for dormitories.

room numbers: Use figures and capitalize room when used with a figure: Room 2, Room 211.


school: Capitalize when part of a proper name: Public School 3, Madison Elementary School, Crocker High School, the School of Building Construction. Lowercase in general use.

seasons: Lowercase fall, winter, spring, summer and all related words, such as springtime. Capitalize only when part of a formal name: Winter Olympics.

semester: Capitalize when followed by a year. Preferred usage for semester is term.

series comma: Do not use comma before ‘and’ or ‘or’ in lists of three or more items unless ambiguity would result: Dr. Smith purchased a microscope, lab coat, clipboard and computer. It is important to differentiate between the board’s regulations, the university’s rules and policies, and the statutory requirements.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: SACS or the association on second reference.

spokesman, spokeswoman: Never spokesperson.

Florida College System: Florida has 28 state colleges—formerly called community colleges. They are under the authority of the Florida Department of Education and the State Board of Education. http://www.fldoe.org/fcs/ . Capitalize Florida College System when using the full title. Lowercase in other general uses: state colleges, the college system, the colleges.
State University System of Florida: Use system on second reference, lowercased. Do not use SUS except in charts and tables. The 12 universities in the State University System and their second references are:

- Florida A&M University, in Tallahassee (FAMU)
- Florida Atlantic University, in Boca Raton (FAU)
- Florida Gulf Coast University, in Fort Myers (FGCU)
- Florida International University, in Miami (FIU)
- Florida Polytechnic University, in Lakeland (FPU)
- Florida State University, in Tallahassee (FSU)
- University of Central Florida, in Orlando (UCF)
- University of Florida, in Gainesville (UF)
- University of North Florida, in Jacksonville (UNF)
- University of South Florida, in Tampa (USF)
- University of West Florida, in Pensacola (UWF)
- New College of Florida, in Sarasota (NCF)

state, federal: Lowercase state in all state of references. Capitalize federal as part of corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of formal name, lowercase when used as adjective to distinguish from state, county, city, town or private entities: our state universities, federal loans, the state of Florida, Federal Communications Commission.

states: Spell out when they stand alone The workshop took place in Florida;. Applications may be mailed to 325 W. Gaines St., Tallahassee, FL

STEM: OK to use in a lead, but on first reference in body of a release, spell out science, technology, engineering and math unless in direct quotes.

student classifications: Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior or senior. Do capitalize a class designation: He is a senior communications major. The Senior Class sponsored the lecture. Plural of freshman is freshmen.

student government association: Lowercase when referring to student governments in general. Capitalize first reference when referring to a specific university’s: UCF Student Government Association members attended the conference. SGA on second reference.

time-date-place sequence: Use this sequence for consistency: The meeting will begin at 4 p.m. Thursday in Room 212.

times: Use figures except for noon and midnight: 4 p.m. or 10 a.m. Do not use “o’clock.” Also avoid redundancies, such as 10 a.m. this morning.
**tomorrow**: Use only in direct quotations and in phrases that do not refer to a specific day: *The world of tomorrow will need additional energy resources.* Use the day of the week in other cases.

**total, totaled, totaling**: The phrase ‘a total of’ is often redundant. It may be used, however, to avoid a numerical figure at the start of a sentence: *A total of 650 people were killed in holiday traffic accidents.*

**toward**: Not towards.

**trademark**: A trademark is a brand, symbol, word, etc., protected by law to prevent a competitor from using it: *Frisbee, AstroTurf, Dumpster.* In general, use a generic equivalent unless the trademark name is essential to the news release. When a trademark is used, capitalize it. The International Trademark Association is a helpful source of information.

**transfer**: Lowercase to classify students.

**trustee**: Lowercase unless used as part of the formal title Board of Trustees for a certain university. Do not capitalize before names except in ceremonial or internal documents. Lowercase when plural: *the university’s trustees.*

**undergraduate**: Lowercase to identify a student who has not earned a degree.

**under way**: Two words in virtually all uses.

**unique**: Use this word sparingly, and do not modify. There is no such thing as “fairly unique” or “very unique.”

**United Faculty of Florida**: Higher education union. UFF on second reference.

**university**: Lowercase unless part of a specific title.

**University Press of Florida**: Book publisher for the state universities.

**U.S.**: Abbreviate with periods as an adjective. Use United States as the noun.

**website**: One word and lowercase. Also webcam, webcast, webmaster. As a short form of World Wide Web, however, it’s the Web.

**website addresses**: http:// may be omitted: *www.flbog.edu.*

**well**: Hyphenate as part of a compound modifier: *well-known, well-rounded.*
**which:** Which is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a non-essential clause that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. The pronoun ‘which’ occasionally may be substituted for ‘that’ in the introduction of an essential clause referring to an inanimate object or animal without a name. In general, this use of ‘which’ should appear only when ‘that’ is used as a conjunction to introduce another clause in the same sentence. Use ‘who’ and ‘whom’ when referring to people: *This regulation requires students to pay a late registration fee, which is determined by a committee of students and faculty who are appointed by the president.*

**who, whom:** Who is used when a person is the subject of a sentence or clause: *Who is speaking?* Whom is used when a person is the object of a verb or preposition: *Whom would you like to hear speak?*

**word-of-mouth:** Hyphenate.

**yearlong:** One word, no hyphen. Also weeklong and daylong.

**years:** Use figures. Use an ‘s’ without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1890s, the 1900s.* Years are the lone exception to the general rule in numerals that a figure is not used to start a sentence: *1976 was a very good year.*

**yesterday:** Use only in direct quotations and in phrases that do not refer to a specific day: *Yesterday we were young.* Use the day of the week in other cases.
News release template

Email subject lines should tell readers the product they’re getting in caps: HIGHLIGHTS, RELEASE, STATEMENT, etc., plus a compelling sentence to draw them in: HIGHLIGHTS: How the Board of Governors is working to revolutionize online education; ADVISORY: University presidents have a proposition for lawmakers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - FEB. 21, 2013

Media contact:
Kim Wilmath
Director of Communications
Board of Governors
kim.wilmath@flbog.edu
850-661-9444

Headline (Board of Governors Meeting Highlights, etc.)
Subhead, used only with meeting highlights to touch on one or more key issues. Include time element. (An update on the future of online education and other snapshots from our November meeting.)

TALLAHASSEE (or other applicable location) — Text body

Text body

# # #

Facts about the State University System of Florida and the Board of Governors
The State University System of Florida is a constitutional body led by the 17-member Board of Governors. The system has 12 universities and more than 330,000 students, making it the second-largest public university system in the nation. Responsibilities include defining the distinctive mission of each institution and managing the system’s coordination and operation. The board appoints a chancellor who serves as the system’s chief executive.

For more, visit www.flbog.edu.
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