Editorial Style Guide

(updated June 24, 2026)

The Florida Atlantic Division of University Communications follows The Associated Press Stylebook (AP). This guide is a reference for the Florida Atlantic community to ensure consistency, clarity and accuracy among print and online publications directed to external audiences. The style guide is not meant to govern academic publications or everyday internal communications (i.e. email messages, syllabi, class or department handouts, etc.). Its purpose is to help the University community present unified and consistent external messages. The most common issues related to higher education are noted below in alphabetical order.

AP Style

The Associated Press Stylebook is updated by Associated Press editors and is available in both trade and spiral-bound editions, with the latter containing extra content specific to journalists working for the AP.

The **AP Stylebook** covers:

- Grammar, punctuation and spelling
- AP style on a variety of questions
- Sports, including terminology and guidelines for printing league standings
- Business
- A briefing on American media law

Use the complete name Florida Atlantic University, or Florida Atlantic, on first reference for external audiences. Florida Atlantic, FAU, or university (not capitalized) can be used on second reference in print or other written materials. Florida Atlantic is the suggested second reference for broadcast media.

ABBREVIATIONS

Before a name: Abbreviate the following titles when used before a full name outside direct quotations: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Mr., Mrs., Rep., the Rev., Sen.* Spell out all except *Dr., Mr. and Mrs.*, when they are used before a name in direct quotations.

After a name: Abbreviate *junior (Jr.)* or *senior (Sr.)* after an individual's name. Abbreviate *company (Co.)*, *corporation (Corp.)*, *incorporated (Inc.)* and *limited (Ltd.)* when used after the name of a corporate entity. Do not precede by a comma.

With dates or numerals: Use the abbreviation A.D., B.C., a.m., p.m., when used with the day or the month (NOTE: upper and lowercases, as well as inclusion of periods). The abbreviations are correct only with figures. *In 450 B.C.; at 9:30 a.m.; in room No. 6; on Sept. 16.*

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. Do not use *st, nd, rd or th* after the day in a date. *Jan. 5; January; January 2012*. (Jan. 5th, 2025 is incorrect).

Addresses: Abbreviate *avenue (Ave.)*, *boulevard (Blvd.)* and *street (St.)* in numbered addresses. *He lives on Pennsylvania Avenue. He lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.* Always use numerical figures for an address number (ex. 9 Morningside Circle). Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names.

ACADEMIC DEGREES

If mention of degrees is necessary to establish someone's credentials, the preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase such as: *Fatima Kader, who has a doctorate in psychology.*

Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree*, a *master's*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts* or *Master of Science*.

Examples: bachelor's degree in biology
Bachelor of Science in biology
B.S. in biology

Use abbreviations only after a full name; never after only a last name. When abbreviating degrees, use the following:

Bachelor of Arts – B.A.
Bachelor Business Administration – B.B.A.
Bachelor of Science – B.S.
Bachelor of Technology – B.T.
Associate of Applied Science – A.A.S.
Associate of Arts – A.A.
Associate of Occupational Studies – A.O.S.
Associate of Science – A.S.

Master of Business Administration – MBA
Master of Education – M.Ed.
Master of Science – M.S.
Master of Arts – M.A.
Master of Fine Arts – M.F.A.
Doctor of Medicine – M.D.
Doctor of Philosophy – Ph.D.
Doctor of Divinity – D.D.
Doctor of Education – Ed.D.
Doctor of Humane Letters – L.H.D.

When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas:
Russell Ivy, Ph.D.

Do not precede and follow a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree. Using both Dr. and Ph.D. is redundant.
Correct: Sam Jones, Ph.D.; Dr. Sam Jones **Incorrect:** Dr. Sam Jones, Ph.D.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS/COLLEGES/OFFICES

Official name is capitalized. (**Examples**: College of Engineering and Computer Science; Office for Students with Disabilities). Lowercase in casual reference. (**Example**: Send the files to communications.)

Florida Atlantic University currently includes 10 colleges. Use full name on first reference and "college" on second reference, not capitalized:

- Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters
- College of Business
- College of Education
- College of Engineering and Computer Science
- College of Social Work and Criminal Justice
- Graduate College
- Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College
- Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine
- Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing
- Charles E. Schmidt College of Science

In listing more than one college, the preference is to list them alphabetically by content area of the college (as listed above), not alphabetically by donor name.

ACADEMIC TITLES

Academic job titles are not capitalized following a person's name. (Example: Sameer Hinduja, associate professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, spoke at today's meeting.)

Director-level titles and above (Dean, Vice President, Associate/Assistant Vice President, Provost, etc.) are capitalized only before a person's full name. It is lowercase when the term is used as a replacement for the name of the individual. (**Examples**: Dean Jennifer Carter of the College of Social Work and Criminal Justice spoke at yesterday's meeting. The dean spoke at today's meeting.)

However, the president's title is always capitalized before his/her name as well as when used as a replacement. (**Examples**: Florida Atlantic President Adam Hasner spoke at yesterday's meeting. The President also spoke at today's meeting.)
NOTE: *In press releases, president is* ***not*** *capitalized on second reference.*

Do not capitalize unofficial titles preceding a name. (**Example**: The exhibit featured artist Mary Smith.)

Do not capitalize titles used without the name. (**Example**: For information, see the registrar. A professor of history will be in attendance.)

Do not use Dr. and title preceding a name. (**Examples**: Incorrect: Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. John Smith. Correct: John Smith, Ph.D., assistant vice president for student affairs.)

ACADEMIC COURSES

Capitalize specific course titles only; do not use quotation marks. (**Examples**: History of European Political Theory; a course in psychology.)

ACT

Use only the initials in referring to the previously designated *American College Testing*.

ADMINISTRATION

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

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*.

ALUMNUS, ALUMNA, ALUMNI, ALUMNAE

- Use **alumnus** when referring to a man who has attended a school (**alumni** is the plural)
- Use **alumna** for similar references to a woman (**alumnae** is the plural)
- **Alumni** is used when referring to a group of men and women
- John Smith ’75 (NOTE: closed quote mark, a.k.a. apostrophe)
- The class of ’75 (NOTE: closed quote mark, a.k.a. apostrophe)
- John Smith, B.A., ’75 (NOTE: closed quote mark, a.k.a. apostrophe)

ALMA MATER

alma mater (lowercase)

AMPERSAND (&)

Use the ampersand when it is part of a formal name: *Baltimore & Ohio Railroad*. The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of *and*.

NOTE: The College for Social Work and Criminal Justice and the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters use “and” in their logos; the College of Engineering and Computer Science prefers “&” in its logo. In text, use “and” for all college names.

ANNUAL

Do not use the term “first annual.” Use “inaugural.” An event cannot be described as annual until the second year.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIENCE

AI is acceptable in headlines and on second reference in text.

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 on Wednesday.*

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Always capitalize when using full title *Board of Governors*, lowercase *board* on second reference. Avoid the use of BOG except in tables or charts.

BRAND NAMES

When a company sponsors a sporting or other event identified only by the company’s name, use the name on the first reference: Buick Open, SoFi Stadium. However, when something is clearly identifiable without the company’s name, don’t include the full

name unless the sponsor is relevant to the story: Fiesta Bowl, not the Vrbo Fiesta Bowl; Arrowhead Stadium, not GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium.

BUILDINGS

The **Breezeway** is the walkway running north/south through the middle of the Boca Raton campus.

The **Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium** is located in the Student Union on the Boca Raton campus.

The **Eleanor R. Baldwin Arena** is located on the Boca Raton campus.

The **FAU/HBOI Marine Science Building** is located at Harbor Branch.

Flager Credit Union Stadium is located on the Boca Raton campus.

The **Student Union**, previously the University Center, is located on the Boca Raton campus.

The **Marleen and Harold Forkas Alumni Center** is located on the Boca Raton campus.

The **FAU/BCC Higher Education Complex** is located at the Fort Lauderdale campus.

The **Schmidt Family Complex for Academic and Athletic Excellence**.

BULLET POINTS

Adhere to the following:

- There is no period at the end of a bullet point even if it's a complete sentence
- Capitalize the first word of every bullet point
- List items should be parallel (all bullets should either be a full sentence or a phrase, but not both)

CAMPUSES/LOCATIONS

Florida Atlantic University currently has six locations. Names listed in bold below are preferred in the first use. Subsequent listings offer additional acceptable uses.

Florida Atlantic Boca Raton
FAU Boca Raton
Boca Raton campus
Florida Atlantic University at Boca Raton

Florida Atlantic Dania Beach
FAU Dania Beach
Also known as SeaTech
Florida Atlantic University at Dania Beach

Florida Atlantic Davie
FAU Davie
Davie campus
Florida Atlantic University at Davie

Florida Atlantic Fort Lauderdale
FAU Fort Lauderdale
Fort Lauderdale campus
Florida Atlantic University at Fort Lauderdale

Florida Atlantic Harbor Branch
FAU Harbor Branch
Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI)
Florida Atlantic University's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (site is located in Fort Pierce, Fla.)

Florida Atlantic Jupiter
FAU Jupiter
John D. MacArthur Campus at Jupiter
Florida Atlantic University at Jupiter

NOTES: When appropriate, "Broward campuses" or "Northern campuses" grouping may be used. The Broward campuses are Dania Beach, Davie and FAU Fort Lauderdale. The Northern campuses are Harbor Branch and FAU Jupiter.

List in alphabetical order when listing more than one campus.

Always spell out "Fort Lauderdale" and "Fort" Pierce.

When using the "campus" in text, lowercase "c." (**Example**: I met my wife at the Jupiter campus.)

CAPITALIZATION

In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. Use a capital letter only if you can justify it by one of the principles listed below.

- **Proper Names:** *John, Mary, Boston, General Electric*
- **Proper Nouns:** Capitalize common nouns such as party, river, street when they are an integral part of the full name for a person, place of thing: *Delaware River; Main Street, the Democratic Party*
- **Lowercase** the common noun elements of names in all plural uses: *the Democratic and Republican parties; the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers; Montgomery and City Line avenues; Delaware and Chester counties*
- **Derivatives:**
    - Capitalize words that are derived from a proper noun and still depend on it for their meaning: *American; English; Shakespearean*
    - Lowercase words that are derived from a proper noun but no longer depend on it for their meaning: *french fries; herculean; venetian blind*
- **Do not capitalize** the words association, building, center, club, conference, college, committee, department, division, office, hall, board, trustees, etc., when used alone to refer to a specific place of group. *The college is nearing its 200th anniversary.*
- **The word "College"** should only be capitalized when referring specifically to another institution's official name (Example: Boston College).

CITIES AND STATES

Cities – The following domestic cities stand alone (do not need to be accompanied by a state) in datelines and basic copy:

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

States – The following are the state abbreviations to be used in **datelines only** (zip code abbreviations in parentheses):

Ala. (AL)	Md. (MD)	N.D. (ND)
Ariz. (AZ)	Mass. (MA)	Okla. (OK)
Ark. (AR)	Mich. (MI)	Ore. (OR)
Calif. (CA)	Minn. (MN)	Pa. (PA)
Colo. (CO)	Miss. (MS)	R.I. (RI)
Del. (DE)	Mont. (MT)	S.D. (SD)
Fla. (FL)	Neb. (NE)	Tenn. (TN)
Ga. (GA)	Nev. (NV)	Vt. (VT)
Ill (IL)	N.H. (NH)	Va. (VA)
Ind. (IN)	N.J. (NJ)	Wash. (WA)
Kan. (KS)	N.M. (NM)	W. Va. (WV)
Ky. (KY)	N.Y. (NY)	Wis. (WI)
La. (LA)	N.C. (NC)	Wyo. (WY)

Eight states are not abbreviated in copy or datelines: Alaska (AK); Hawaii (HI); Idaho (ID); Iowa (IA); Maine (ME); Ohio (OH); Texas (TX); Utah (UT)

CLASSES, COURSES

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

CLASSROOM

Classroom is one word.

CLASS STANDING

Use lowercase for first-year students (or freshmen), sophomores, juniors or seniors when referring to individuals. Capitalize names of organized entities. (**Examples**: Class of 1970; the Senior Class).

COLLEGE

Capitalize when part of a university's formal name for a specific college: *College of Business*. 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 state colleges.

COMMAS

In a series: Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series, unless one is critical to clarity. (**Examples**: The flag is red, white and blue. He would nominate Tom, Dick or Harry.)

Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series, however, if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction. (**Example**: I had orange juice, ham and eggs, and toast for breakfast.)

Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases. (**Example:** The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.)

With equal adjectives: Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in rank. If the commas could be replaced by the word "and" without changing the sense, the adjectives are equal. (**Examples**: A thoughtful, precise manner; a dark, dangerous street.)

Use no comma when the last adjective before a noun outranks its predecessors because it is an integral element of a noun phrase, which is the equivalent of a single noun. (**Examples**: *a cheap fur coat* (the noun phrase is fur coat); *the old oaken bucket; a new, blue spring bonnet.*)

With introductory clauses and phrases: A comma normally is used to separate an introductory clause or phrase from a main clause. (**Example**: When he grew tired of the mad pace of New York, he moved to Philadelphia.)

The comma may be omitted after short introductory phrases if no ambiguity would result. (Example: *During the night he heard many noises.* But use the comma if its omission would slow comprehension: *On the street below, the curious gathered.*)

Introducing direct quotes: Use a comma to introduce a complete, one-sentence quotation within a paragraph. (**Example**: Catherine said, "I spent six weeks in Italy and came back speaking English with an Italian accent.)

Do not use a comma at the start of an indirect or partial quotation. (**Example***:* He said his victory put him "firmly on the road to a new season record.")

With hometowns and ages: Use a comma to set off an individual's hometown when it is placed in apposition. (**Examples**: Mary Richards, Minneapolis, and Rhoda Morganstern, New York, were there.) However, the use of the word "of" without a comma between the individual's name and the city name generally is preferred. (Example: Mary Richards of Minneapolis and Rhoda Morganstern of New York were there.)

If an individual's age is used, set it off by commas. (**Example**: Mary Richards, 48, Minneapolis, was present.) Again, the use of the word "of" will eliminate the need for some of the commas.

With Yes and No: Yes, I will be there.

In Large Figures: Use a comma for most figures greater than 999. The major exceptions are street addresses (1234 Main Street), broadcast frequencies (1600 kilohertz), room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers and years (1916).

COMMITTEES

In the United States, a committee is an "it," not a "they." Committee *members*, on the other hand, are "people on a committee" or "they." The same applies to a board, a department or an office. Therefore*, "The committee gave its recommendation." "Committee members recommend."* **Capitalize the names of committees.**

COMPOSITION TITLES

Use quotation marks around the names of composition titles such as story names, TV show names, movie names, music titles, Broadway shows, etc., except the Bible, Quran and other holy books, and books that are primarily catalogs or reference materials (i.e. journals, dictionaries, newspapers, magazines, etc.). (**Examples**: "The Star-Spangled Banner," the NBC-TV "TODAY" program, the "CBS Evening News," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show.")

COURTESY TITLES

In general, do not use the courtesy titles Miss, Mr., Mrs., or Ms., on first reference. Instead, use the first and last names of the person.

Do not use Mr. in any reference to couples unless it is combined with Mrs.: *Mr. and Mrs. John Doe.* If you are unaware of the marital status of a woman, use Ms. rather than Mrs. Always try to use a woman's first name: *John and Jane Doe* is preferable to *Mr. and Mrs. John Doe.*

CURRICULUM VITAE

Summary of one's personal history and professional qualifications. Plural is *curricula vitae*.

DASHES/HYPHENS

There are important distinctions between hyphens, en dashes and em dashes.

The hyphen (hyphen key on a PC/Mac) is used to hyphenate compound words and between non-continuing numbers, eg., phone numbers and sports scores. *See more detail under HYPHENS.*

The en dash (ctl + hyphen keys on a PC, opt + hyphen keys on a Mac) is used to connect numerals (or months) that indicate a range, such as dates, times or page reference numbers. (**Examples**: June 10–14, January –March, pages 234–239.)

The em dash (ctl + alt + hyphen keys on a PC, opt + shift + hyphen keys on a Mac) is used to denote a sudden break in thought that causes an abrupt change in sentence structure. (**Example**: The Florida Atlantic Owls — including a football team that made its debut in 2001 — began competing in NCAA Division I.) The em dash also can be represented by typing two hyphens (--) with a space on either side in all uses except the start of a paragraph. However, in all formal publications and on the Web when possible, use the specific key command or character to em dash.

(NOTE: word processing and layout programs often do not convert correctly, so use the guidelines above.)

Follow these guidelines for proper grammatical use:

Abrupt Change: Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence for an emphatic pause. (**Examples**: We will fly to Paris in June — if I get a raise. Smith offered a plan — it was unprecedented — to raise revenues.)

Series Within a Phrase: When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas, use dashes to set off the full phrase. (Example: He listed the qualities — intelligence, charm, beauty, independence — that he liked in a woman.)

Attribution: "Who steals my purse steals trash." — Shakespeare

DATES AND TIME

Always use Arabic figures for dates, without st, nd, rd or th: *Nov. 1, 1998.* Always abbreviate the months of Jan., Feb., Aug. Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out March, April, May, June and July. (Exceptions allowed on formal invitations: February 12, 2008).

Use figures for times except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. It isn't necessary to indicate a time "on the hour" by typing ":00". Avoid redundancies like 12 noon; 10 p.m. tonight.

If the current year is implied, it isn't necessary to write it out. Use the year in text if it refers to past or future years. (**Examples**: Our January 2000 meeting. Our Dec. 20 party.)

Lowercase a.m. and p.m., with periods: 9:30 a.m., 1 p.m., noon.

Spaces between the hyphens with times: 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

DAYS OF THE WEEK

Capitalize. Do not abbreviate, except when needed in a tabular format: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat (three letters, without periods, in tabular composition).

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.

DOCTORAL, DOCTORATE

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

DR.

NOTE: *In press releases or other communications to the media, the only degree to be referenced as "Dr." is the Doctor of Medicine or M.D.*

See Academic Degrees section for additional information.

DOLLARS AND CENTS

Use numerals and the word cents (all lowercase) for amounts less than a dollar*: 5 cents, 12 cents.*

Use the $ sign and decimal for larger amounts: *$1.25 million, $2.55*

For whole dollar amounts, drop the decimals: *$2, $15, $155*

For dollar figures greater than 999 a comma should be used: *$12,000; $500,000*

ELLIPSIS (…)

Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts and documents. Be especially careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning. In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces as …

Punctuation guidelines: If the words that precede an ellipsis constitute a grammatically complete sentence, either in the original or in the condensation, place a period at the end of the last word *before* the ellipsis. Follow it with a regular space and an ellipsis: *"I no longer have a strong enough political base. …"* (**NOTE:** There should be a period and then an ellipsis.)

When the grammatical sense calls for a question mark, exclamation point, comma or colon, the sequence is word, punctuation mark, regular space, ellipsis: *Will you come? …*

EMAIL

Lowercase with no hyphen: *email*

ENTITLED vs. TITLED

"Entitled" means that someone has rights to something. (**Example**: She felt entitled to special treatment ever since she won an Oscar.) "Titled" means that something has received a title. (**Example**: The workshop titled Experience Freedom, Compassion and Unity through Foregiveness will begin on Saturday, Nov. 7.)

FACULTY

The word "faculty" pertains to a group of people, not one person. One person should be referred to as a faculty member.

GPA

GPA is acceptable in all references for *grade-point average*.

HEADLINES

Numbers (0-10) can be used in a headline and can also begin a headline.
Example: 7 Florida Atlantic University Students Earn Scholarships

No periods in a headline.
Example: US and UK Leaders Meet at Historic Summit

Do not spell out million in a headline regarding money.
Example: Florida Atlantic Donors Gift $5M to Schmidt Center
NOTE: *The word "million" must be spelled out in the body of the text.*

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare is one word.

HYPHENS

Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.

Avoid Ambiguity: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted. (**Examples**: He recovered his health. He re-covered the leaky roof.)

Compound Modifiers: Use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb very and all adverbs that end in ly. (**Examples**: a full-time job; a part-time student; a better-qualified applicant; a know-it-all attitude; a very good time; an easily remembered rule. A full-time student **but** the student attends full time.)

Compound Proper Nouns and Adjectives. (**Examples**: Italian-American; Mexican-American. No hyphen, however, for Latin American or French Canadian.)

Avoid duplicated vowels, tripled consonants. (Examples: anti-intellectual; pre-empt, shell-like; co-op.)

Listings of Multiple Hyphenated Terms. (Examples: He received a 10- to 20-year prison sentence.)

With the prefix "non," hyphenate all except the following words, which have specific meanings of their own. (**Examples:** nonchalance; nonsense; nonchalant; nonsensical; nondescript. Other words and proper names preceded by "non" should be hyphenated: non-traditional; non-credit; non-German.)

Do not hyphenate vice president (or any other compound title) in any reference.

INITIALS

Use periods and no space when an individual uses initials instead of a first name: *H.L. Mencken.*

INTERMURAL, INTERCOLLEGIATE, INTRAMURAL

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

INTERNET/COMPUTER REFERENCES

The words **Internet, Web and Word Wide Web** should always be capitalized in every reference. Other terms include:

- **website** is one word and lowercase
- **home page** is two words lowercase
- **CD-ROM**
- **database**
- **download**
- **email** (no hyphen)
- **online** (no hyphen)

JUNIOR/SENIOR

Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names of persons. Do not precede by a comma: *John F. Kennedy Jr.*

MORE THAN/OVER

When referring to something that can be counted, use "more than" rather than "over." The word "over" generally refers to spatial relationships. (**Examples**: More than 50 attended. The plan flew over South Florida.)

NAMES

People are entitled to be known however they want to be known, as along as their identities are clear. A nickname should be used in place of a person's given name only when it is the way the individual prefers to be known: *Magic Johnson*.

NCAA

Acceptable acronym for National Collegiate Athletic Association in all references.

NUMERALS

In general, spell out whole numbers below 10; use figures for 10 and above. **(Examples:** He has a fleet of 10 station wagons and two buses. They had 10 dogs, six cats and 97 hamsters.)

Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. If necessary, recast the sentence:
WRONG: 993 freshmen entered the college last year.
RIGHT: Last year, 993 freshmen entered the college.

Use numerals even for numbers below 10 when indicating the following:

- ages
- course credit hours
- statistics
- ratios
- percentages
- amounts of money

Use a comma after digits signifying thousands except when referring to:

- temperature
- years
- SAT scores

PAGE NUMBERS

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

PERCENT (%)

Use the % sign in place of the word "percent" when paired with a number, with no space. (**Examples:** Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago; her mortgage rate is 4.75%; he won 56.2% of the vote.)

In a metaphorical context, spell it out. (**Example:** He has a zero percent chance of winning.)

PHONE NUMBERS

Use figures. The form: *561-297-5555*. (Do NOT use periods). If extension numbers are needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension: *561-297-5555, ext. 22*.

Capitalize letters in phone numbers: 1-800-FAU-OWLS

POSSESSIVES

Plural nouns not ending in "s": Add "'s": *the alumni's contributions; women's rights.*

Plural nouns ending in "s": Add only an apostrophe: *the churches' needs; the girls' toys; the horses' food.*

Singular nouns not ending in "s": Add "'s": the girl's toy; the horse's food.

Singular common nouns ending in "s": Add "'s" unless the next word begins with s: *the hostess's invitation; the hostess' seat; the witness's answer; the witness' story.*

Singular proper names ending in "s": Use only an apostrophe: Achilles' heel; Agnes' book; Xerxes' armies.

Special Expressions: The following exceptions to the general rule for words not ending in "s" apply to words that end in an "s" sound and are followed by a word that begins with "s": *for appearance sake*. Use "'s" otherwise: *the appearance's cost; my conscience's voice.*

Joint Possession, Individual Possession: Use a possessive form after only the last word if ownership is joint*: Fred and Sylvia's apartment; Fred and Sylvia's stocks.*

Use a possessive form after both words if the objects are individually owned: *Fred's and Sylvia's books.*

Descriptive Phrases: Do not add an apostrophe to a word ending in "s" when it is used primarily in a descriptive sense: *citizens band radio; a teachers college; a writers guide; our speakers bureau.*

An 's is required when a term involves a plural word that does not end in s: *a children's hospital; a people's republic.*

Quasi Possessives: Follow the rules above in composing the possessive form of words that occur in such phrases as: *a day's pay; two weeks' vacation; three days' work; your money's worth.* Frequently, a hyphenated form is clearer; two-week vacation; a three-day job.

QUOTATION MARKS

The period and comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotations marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

He said, "I am shocked and horrified by the incident."
He said he was "shocked and horrified by the incident."
"I do not object," he said, "to the tenor of the report."

Quotation within Quotation: Alternate between double quotation marks ("or") and single marks ('or'). (**Example**: She said, "I quote from his letter, 'I agree with Kipling that "the female of the species is more deadly than the male," but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,' a remark he did not explain.")

Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time. (Example: *She said, "He told me, "I love you.'")*

ROTC

Acceptable on first reference for Reserve Officers' Training Corps. No periods.

RSVP

RSVP is acceptable in all references. Do not use "please" before RSVP. (**Example**: RSVP by Tuesday, Jan. 22.)

SEASONS

Lowercase spring, summer, fall, winter and derivatives such as springtime unless part of a formal name (Winter Carnival, Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics). Lowercase seasons when used with a year (spring 2023)

SEMESTERS

Uppercase fall, spring, summer only when referring to a specific semester.
(**Example**: I started classes during the Fall 2023 semester. I enjoyed my business class in Fall 2023).

Note: *In press releases, always lowercase fall, spring, summer when referring to a specific semester.*

SEMICOLON

Use the semicolon (;) to separate elements of a series when the items in the series are long or when individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas. The semicolon is used before the "and" in the series. (**Example**: He is survived by a son, John Smith, of Chicago; three daughters, Jane Smith, of Wichita, Kan., Mary Smith, of Denver, and Susan of Boston; and a sister, Martha, of Omaha, Neb."

SENTENCES

Use only one space between sentences — not two.

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

SACS or the *association* on second reference.

SPELLING AND TERMS

For spelling, consult *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.* A few common terms include:

- Adviser, not advisor
- catalog, not catalogue
- theater, except in Florida Atlantic's University Theatre and the "theatre department"

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 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)

THAT, WHICH

Use **that** and **which** in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name.

Use **that** for essential clauses, important to the meaning of a sentence, and without commas. (**Example**: I remember the day that we met.) Use **which** for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary, and use commas. (**Example**: The team, which finished last year a year ago, is in first place.)

TOWARD vs. TOWARDS

Correct word is "toward." There is no "s" on the word.

TWITTER (X)

The words "Twitter" and "tweet" are no longer used. This should now be referred to as the "social media platform X." Use the word "post" in place of "tweets."

UNIQUE

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

WEB ADDRESS

Florida Atlantic University's Web address is www.fau.edu. No need to use "http://" unless address does NOT start with www. Do NOT italicize or set off Web and email addresses in text.

WHO, WHOM

Who is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase. (**Examples**: The woman who rented the room left the window open. Who is there?)

Whom is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition. (Examples: The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open. Whom do you wish to see?)

Quick Tips to Improve the FAU Press Release

The Press Release

- Always use **Times New Roman** font.
- **Media Contact line** – 12 size font; bold '**MEDIA CONTACT'** and put in all CAPS. Make sure this is always ragged right.
- **Headline font size** – 18 points for one deck; 16 points for two – bold and centered.

- **Subhead (not required) –** size should be 14 points, **bold**, centered and italicized

- **Dateline –** Campus city in all caps followed by comma and state abbreviation (Fla.) with the date release is disseminated in parentheses. This is in all bold font, 12 points. Make sure a hyphen follows.

ex. – **BOCA RATON, Fla. (October 20, 2026)** –

- **Body of release –** text size is 12 points or 11 points if release is more than one page when printed for a press kit or hard copy distribution. Paragraph spacing is 1.5.

- **A quote** should be included in the release whenever possible.

- **Keep this line simple:** For more information, contact Lisa Metcalf at 561-297-2676 or lmetcalf@fau.edu.

- **-FAU-** should be at bottom, bold and centered.

- **Boilerplate** follows – 10 point font and italicized.

About Florida Atlantic University:
Florida Atlantic University serves more than 32,000 undergraduate and graduate students across six campuses along Florida's Southeast coast. Recognized as one of only 13 institutions nationwide to achieve three Carnegie Foundation designations - R1: Very High Research Spending and Doctorate Production," "Opportunity College and University," and Carnegie Community Engagement Classification - FAU stands at the intersection of academic excellence and social mobility. Ranked among the Top 100 Public Universities by U.S. News & World Report, FAU is also nationally recognized as a Top 25 Best-In-Class College and cited by Washington Monthly as "one of the country's most effective engines of upward mobility." To learn more, visit www.fau.edu.

The Media Advisory

- Always use **Times New Roman** font.

- ***MEDIA ADVISORY*** **and/or** ***PHOTO OPPORTUNITY *** - should be 18 points font, centered and bold at top of page.

- **Media Contact line** – 12 size font; bold '**MEDIA CONTACT'** and put in all CAPS. Make sure this is always ragged right.

- **Headline font size** – 18 points for one deck; 16 points for two – bold and centered.

- **Subhead (not required) –** size should be 14 points, bold, centered and italicized.

- **Dateline –** Campus city, state in all caps with the date release is disseminated in parentheses. This is in all bold font, 12 points. Make sure a hyphen follows.

ex. – **BOCA RATON, Fla. (October 20, 2026)** –

- **Body of release –** Text size is 12 points. Paragraph spacing is at 1.5.

- **Keep this line simple:** For more information, contact Joshua Glanzer at 561-297-1168 or jglanzer@fau.edu.

- **-FAU-** should be at bottom, bold and centered.

- **Boilerplate** follows – 10 point font and italicized.

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