

EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

Guidelines for creating consistent written content
across all platforms at TJC

Version 1.0

Introduction

Consistency in writing style conveys a positive, professional image.

The TJC Editorial Style Guide is designed to establish clear standards across written campus materials. The purpose of the guide is to eliminate guesswork and make writing easier for TJC's printed and web publications.

TJC's official reference for nonacademic communications is the "Associated Press (AP) Stylebook." Used by nearly all newspapers and magazines, AP style is familiar to most people and is clear and easy to read. Although a few AP rules differ from those taught in English classes (e.g., the final comma in a simple series is eliminated), this is done intentionally for brevity and clarity.

Some preferences given here are unique to TJC and may deviate from AP style. For example, the word college is lowercase except when referring to TJC. This guide will address instances where TJC and AP styles diverge.

Where conflicts exist between this guide and other guides, this style guide takes precedence. For other general rules, use a primary style guide that pertains to the publication you are writing or editing. The AP Stylebook is used primarily for news releases, the Apache Magazine, college brochures, marketing materials and most documents targeting a general audience.

For spelling issues not addressed by Associated Press or TJC style, consult Webster's New World College Dictionary. Additional questions regarding this guide may be directed to emul2@tjc.edu or 903-510-2370.

About our name

Our official name is Tyler Junior College, and the entire name should be used in the first reference of a document. After the first reference, it is acceptable to use TJC or the College.

Wrong: Tyler Jr. College

Abbreviations

Avoid using abbreviations and acronyms on first reference unless they are widely recognized, such as FBI, NASA, ROTC, HMO, etc. Do not use periods with these familiar abbreviations and acronyms. If in doubt, check the AP Stylebook.

Academic degrees

A.A., A.S. – (no space after first period) Associate of Arts, Associate of Science

B.A., B.S. – Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science

M.A., M.S. – master of arts, master of science

Ed.D., Ph.D. – Doctor of Education, Doctor of Philosophy

M.B.A. – Master of Business Administration

Do not add the word “degree” after an abbreviation of the degree.

Wrong: She’ll receive her Ph.D. degree this fall.

Right: She’ll receive her Ph.D. this fall.

Wrong: She has a B.A. degree in chemistry.

Right: She has a bachelor’s degree in chemistry.

Accreditation abbreviations

Do not use accreditation abbreviations (examples: CFA, CRRA, CPA, AIA) after names in news releases or general publications.

Apache ID number, A-Number, A#

In written documents, use Apache ID number on first reference, then A-Number on second reference and beyond. On fillable forms, use A# only.

Never use: A number, a number, a-number.

Corp., Co. and Inc.

Abbreviate “company,” “corporation,” “incorporated” and “limited” when used after the name of a corporate entity; do not set off with commas.

For example: Dell Inc., FedEx Corp., Ford Motor Co.

Courtesy titles

Before a name, abbreviate titles when used before a full name. For example: Dr. Mike Metke, Gov. Greg Abbott, State Rep. Matt Schaefer, U.S. Rep. Louis Gohmert, State Sen. Bryan Hughes, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, and the Rev. Billy Graham. Abbreviate “junior” and “senior” as part of a name; do not set off with commas.

For example: John Smith Jr.

Months

Spell out months when used alone or with the year only: October 1989. Abbreviate the month – except for March, April, May, June and July – when used with a specific date: Nov. 23. Correct month abbreviations are: Jan. (January), Feb. (February), Aug. (August), Sept. (September), Oct. (October), Nov. (November) and Dec. (December).

Schools

School of Continuing Studies

School of Engineering, Math and Science

School of Humanities, Communications and Fine Arts

School of Nursing and Health Sciences

School of Professional and Technical Programs

States

Spell out states in all uses.

United States

U.S. (with periods and no space) is acceptable in all uses.

Right: He came to the U.S. to get an education.

Right: Extension is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Acronyms

Avoid acronyms whenever possible. When they must be used, spell out the full name on first reference.

Capitalization

Our preference is to lowercase. There are, however, some exceptions.

Academic degrees

When referring to degrees in general, lowercase and use the possessive for associate's, bachelor's and master's.

Right: More than 1,000 students earned associate's degrees.

Right: Fewer than a dozen people hold doctorates in this field.

Capitalize the formal name of the degree.

Right: She received a Bachelor of Arts in biology.

Academic titles

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as dean and chair when they precede the name, but use lowercase elsewhere.

Alumni association

Capitalize the full name, Tyler Junior College Alumni Association or TJC Alumni Association; but lowercase alumni association when not used as the proper name.

Board of trustees

Capitalize the full name, Tyler Junior College Board of Trustees; lowercase the board, board members and trustees.

Schools/divisions

Capitalize formal names of schools and divisions of the College. Lowercase informal references.

Right: School of Engineering, Mathematics and Sciences

Wrong: In the Nursing School, professors stress the importance of hands-on medical training.

College

Uppercase “College” when referring specifically to TJC.

Courses/programs

Lowercase when describing courses in general; uppercase the specific course or program; of course, always uppercase proper nouns for languages: English, Spanish, French, etc.

Right: I took Organic Chemistry, Ancient Greek and Roman Mythology, General Physics Lab, and Elementary Calculus. I passed two of them but still was dropped from the biochemistry program.

Right: He is enrolled in a mathematics course, two literature courses, and a physical education class.

Dean, dean’s list

dean (uppercase only when it precedes the dean’s name), dean’s list

Departments

Capitalize the name of the department, for example, TJC Department of History; but lowercase history department; always capitalize proper names in department names, for example, English and Spanish departments

Titles

Titles preceding a personal name are uppercased. The title is lowercased when it stands alone or follows a personal name.

Right: President Mike Metke

Right: Dr. Mike Metke, president of Tyler Junior College

Right: the president

Right: Joe Jones, chair of the history department

Resident advisor

Lowercase “resident advisor,” but when it is abbreviated, use capitals: RA.

Computers

Computer terms

blog

database

dot-com

download

email (singular and plural)

Facebook

gigabyte

homepage

HTML

Internet

keyboard

laptop

logon, login, logoff

megabyte (abbreviated MB or mb)

mouse (plural: mice or mouses)

multimedia

online

podcast

Really Simple Syndication (abbreviated RSS)

terabyte

Twitter

upload

URL

weblog (also, blog)

website

Wi-Fi

wiki
World Wide Web (also, the Web)

Email and Web addresses

TJC does not italicize email and Web addresses. The preferred style for Web addresses that start with the protocol “http://” is to leave the protocol off if it is followed by “www.” Use “http://” if it is not followed by “www” and use the protocol if it is something other than “http://.” Individuals can always opt to use the protocol as long as they are consistent within a publication.

When a Web address ends a sentence, finish with a period. For example: The TJC website address is www.tjc.edu.

Punctuation

We do not use the serial comma: “Basically, students will do course work in three major areas: economics, languages and history.” This is done for clarity and brevity.

Apostrophes

M.S.’s, Ph.D.’s (plurals)

Plural of a single letter: A’s, B’s

Decade as a noun: The 1990s were a profitable time. The ’90s saw a rise in enrollment.

Decade as a possessive: His thesis discusses the 1990s’ cultural changes.

Books/videos/magazines, etc.

Follow AP style, which means no italics for composition titles. Use quote marks around book titles, computer game titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, album and song titles, and the titles of lectures, speeches and works of art. Names of newspapers, magazines, newsletters and other compositions or publications are capitalized but do not take quotes. See AP for more details.

Commas

Do not use a comma before Jr., Sr., Inc., Co., Corp., or Ltd.

Double spaces

TJC does not double space between sentences in its publications. Single space between sentences, please.

Em dashes

Em dashes (–) can be used either with or without a space before and after the dash, depending on preference. Usage must, however, be consistent within a document or publication.

Hyphens

On-campus program (As a general rule, all compound modifiers should be hyphenated.)

Vice president (no hyphen)

Fundraising, fundraiser (preferred use is one word, without a hyphen or a space)

Highly developed (no hyphen with adverbs ending in “ly”)

Nonprofit

No hyphen with “non,” “pre,” “post,” “sub,” etc., compounds.

Exceptions:

When the second word in a pair is capitalized; e.g., non-English.

Numbers; e.g., pre-1954.

Re-create when used to mean create again; recreate is an awkward verb meaning to take part in recreation.

When the last letter of a prefix is the same as the first letter in the second word, use a hyphen: anti-intellectual, pre-existing.

Quotation marks

Use single quotation marks in headlines and inside double-quotation marks.

Numbers

TJC follows AP style: Spell out whole numbers one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above. Fractions standing alone are spelled out. For fractions with whole numbers, use numerals.

Right: She has eight cats and 11 dogs. About one-fifth of her salary goes to buying 2 1/2 tons of pet food each year.

Percent

Spell out the word “percent,” repeating the word if a range is being described. Do not spell out the numbers in percentages; use numerals.

Wrong: More than 30% of the students were below average.

Wrong: Fewer than five percent of students own airplanes.

Wrong: The tuition remission will be between 15 and 40 percent.

Right: The tuition increase will be between 5 percent and 10 percent.

Note: Only use % in tables and charts.

Telephone numbers

Preferred: 202-555-4832

Preferred: (202) 555-4832

Preferred: 202.555.4832

Unacceptable: 202/555/4832

Unacceptable: 202/555-4832

Extensions: 202-555-4832 ext. 123

Time, day, date and place

Information for events should be written in this order: time, day, date, place. The group will meet at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12, in Room 111 of Jenkins Hall. Lowercase a.m. and p.m., with no space between the two. For dates, always use Arabic figures, not st, nd, rd or th. For time, always use figures, except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. Do not use :00 if the time is on the hour.

Examples:

10 a.m.

3:15 p.m.

from noon to 1 p.m. (use “to” when the phrase also includes “from”)

3-5 p.m.

Years

Use figures, without commas: 1988. Use commas only with a month or day: Dec. 17, 1998, was a great day. Use an “s” without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: the 1960s, the 1700s.

Year span

Preferred style for a span of years is 2011-12. Also acceptable for design purposes is 2011-2012.

Odds & Ends

Advisor, adviser

Departing from AP style, the preferred spelling is “advisor,” which is used more commonly in academia. “Adviser” is acceptable in releases going to organizations that follow AP style.

Alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

Proper usage is as follows:

alumnus: one male graduate

alumni: more than one male graduate or a mixture of male and female graduates

alumna: one female graduate

alumnae: more than one female graduate

College-wide, campus-wide (but nationwide, statewide, worldwide)

Courtesy titles

In general, do not use Mr., Miss, Mrs., or Ms.

Founders Day

No apostrophe for Founders Day. Leaving it out alleviates having it three different ways across campus materials – Founders? Founder’s? Founders’? – and therefore creates consistency.

Gender-specific language

Try to avoid. For example, never assume someone is male: A professor should always control his classes. Better: Professors should always control their classes.

Chair/chairman: Use chair to refer to the head of a committee unless the official title is chairman or

chairwoman or the gender is known. Always use subject/pronoun consistency.

Right: Whom did they elect as chair of the committee?

Spokesman/spokeswoman: Avoid unless gender is known. Better to recast the sentence or use spokesperson.

Wrong: Who is the spokesman for our group?

Right: Who is the spokesperson for our group?

Even better: Who speaks for our group?

Right: Cynthia Smith, spokeswoman for the group, explained the resolution.

Right: Chris Smith, speaking for the group, explained the resolution.

Over/more than

“Over” is a descriptor of physical location; “more than” is a descriptor of quantity. Use “more than” when referring to quantities, i.e., The event raised more than \$1 million; not over \$1 million. Or: More than 800 individuals attended the concert; not Over 800 individuals attended.

Parents Weekend

No apostrophe for Parents Weekend. Leaving it out alleviates having it three different ways across campus materials – Parents? Parent’s? Parents’? – and therefore creates consistency.

Residence hall (not dormitory)

Theatre

Use theatre when it is part of proper name, as in Jean Browne Theatre and Theatre TJC, or the name of the department, as in the TJC Department of Theatre.

T-shirt

Hyphenated, with “T” always uppercase and the “s” lowercase.