# Writing Style Manual

## A

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### a, an
Use <u>a</u> before constant sounds
a department, a history instructor
Use <u>an</u> before vowel sounds:
She ate an apple. They waited an hour. (The silent "h" in hour gives the word a beginning vowel sound.)

### AA / AS / AAS / AAOT
See "academic degrees."

### abbreviations and acronyms
Also see "acronyms" and "state abbreviations." In general, use abbreviations and acronyms sparingly. On second references, phrases such as "the committee" or "the center" often are preferable to an acronym.  The accepted abbreviation for Blue Mountain Community College is BMCC (no periods).

### academic and nonacademic units and bodies
Capitalize only the complete and official names of divisions, departments, programs, offices and official bodies (such as BMCC Board of Education, Faculty Association, Associated Student Government). Informal and shortened versions of such names should be lowercase.

### academic degrees and fields of study
In general, don't capitalize general references to degrees.
> Sammy Boggs earned an AS in Animal Science last June.
> Suzie Smith is in the Associate of Applied Science degree program.
> Tom Jones is working toward an associate's degree in theater.
> His brother earned an associate of arts degree in science two years ago.
> His sister also earned an associate of arts degree.

Use abbreviations to describe the academic degrees a person holds.
> BA, MA and PhD
> Margaret Mayer, PhD
> Margaret Mayer, PhD, spoke at the commencement ceremony.

If the academic degree is spelled out, use an apostrophe before the "s."
> associate's degrees, bachelor's degree, master's degree
> Oregon State University offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.
> I want to earn a master's degree in art.

but:
> a bachelor of arts degree in math
> The university offers the bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, master of arts, master of science, master of fine arts, and doctor of philosophy degrees.

### academic departments and programs
Traditionally, academic units are called departments or programs.
Capitalize the words "department" and "program" when they are part of the official name of the department or program.
> the English Department
> the Nursing Program
> Diesel Technology Program

Also capitalize when the intent is there, but the word "department" is only implied.

> In the future, Diesel Technology should continue to expand.
>
> The Nursing faculty presented an exhibit …

However, use lowercase when referring to students in a department.

> All dental assisting students should learn to take X-rays.
>
> This requirement applies to all nursing students.
>
> dental assistant students … agriculture students … English students

Examples:

> The Farrier Program has been discontinued.
>
> Classes in the Civil Engineering program are full. (Yes, "programs" should be lowercase.)
>
> BMCC offers programs in nursing and dental assisting.
>
> He is a second-year nursing student.
>
> He is a history major.
>
> She is majoring in mathematics.
>
> He is taking several theater courses.
>
> It is important to follow the dental assistant curriculum.
>
> He earned an associate's degree in mathematics.

But:

> "He earned a degree in Russian literature" (Russian is a proper noun).

## academic majors

Lowercase academic majors except proper nouns.

> history, social science studies, Spanish, nursing.

## academic titles

Don't capitalize general references to academic rank or title.

Refer to faculty members at BMCC as "instructors," not "professors."

If it's important to show someone's academic degree, put the degree after the name (Lincoln DeBunce, PhD).

In text, give the title of a faculty or staff member or student the first time you mention the person's name; thereafter, just use the surname.

Modifiers such as "math" in "math instructor Guy Post" or "department" in "department chair Dan Lange" should be lowercase.

Also see "administrative titles."

## accents

(Special marks above or below letters.) See "diacritical marks."

## access

This word primarily is a noun. Although it's used as a verb when speaking of computers, use it as a noun in other contexts.

> I want to obtain access to my student records.

but:

> I need to access the server.

## acknowledgment

Not acknowledgement.

## acronyms

BMCC (without periods or spaces) is the accepted acronym for Blue Mountain Community College.

Do not use "BM."

In general, use acronyms sparing. Often, phrases such as "the committee" or "the center" are preferable

to abbreviations or acronyms, which can be ambiguous.

Spell out names on first reference, use acronym on second reference.  Acronyms are acceptable on first reference only when the acronym is common knowledge, such as FBI. One exception is GPA, which is not spelled out.

> He received a grant from the National Institutes of Health. The NIH is one of the world's foremost research centers.

Wrong:

> He received a grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH).

## acting, former

Don't capitalize in a formal name.

> She said acting dean Mary Jones would be there. He introduced former President John Turner.

## A.D. and B.C.

Two frequently used era designations are A.D. (anno Domini, "in the year of the Lord") and B.C. ("before Christ" or "before Common Era"). Both are set in small capital letters. Notice that A.D. appears before a year number and B.C. follows a year number.

> 800 B.C.

but:

> A.D. 1056

## Add/Drop form

## additionally

Nonstandard. Use "in addition" or "also."

> In addition, you must take a placement examination.

## administrative and academic units

Administrative units usually are offices or services, centers or institutes, museums, or libraries. Capitalize them only when you use the formal name.

> Office of Academic Affairs
> Office of College Advancement
> Career and Counseling Center
> Center the Student Services Division
> BMCC Library

## administrative titles

Also see "academic titles."

Refer to people who oversee academic or administrative units as follows:

> president
> director
> dean
> chair
> vice president

Capitalize and spell out formal titles when they immediately precede a name.

> Director Student Financial Assistance Yadira Gonzalez

However, titles should be lowercase when they follow the individual's name.

> Yadira Gonzalez, director student financial assistance

Do not capitalize job descriptions; descriptors such as "math instructor," "metallurgy advisor," and "clerical specialist" are job descriptions and should be lowercase, even when they precede a person's name (e.g., metallurgy adviser Jane Doe).

> He is dean of the Student Services Division.

The guest speaker is President Cam Preus.
BMCC President Cam Preus will speak at graduation.
the president will speak
the college's president, the college president
BMCC's president serves on many committees.
Cam Preus, president of BMCC, attends many functions.
She is the program coordinator.

but:

Director of Student Recruitment and Marketing Anne Livingston is not retiring.

## Adobe Acrobat

## advisor
Not "adviser."
(Use lowercase; e.g., the EMT advisor, the EMT Program advisor.)

## affect, effect
Both "affect" and "effect" can be either nouns or verbs. Affect, as a verb, means to influence:
The game will affect the standings.
Affect, as a noun, is used mostly in psychology or to describe an emotion.
Her affect was flat.
Effect, as a verb, means to cause:
She will effect many changes at the college.
Effect, as a noun, means result:
The effect of his actions was overwhelming.

## Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity
An approved version of the college's affirmative action and equal opportunity statement should appear on all college publications. The Office of College Advancement and Marketing can provide you with acceptable versions of this statement.

## African-American (adj.), African American (n.)
Also see Inclusive language. Hyphenate when describing a person or people:
A group of African-American students were honored at a reception.
Do not hyphenate when using the term as a noun:
Many African Americans attended the reception.
Also see "race and ethnicity" under "inclusive language."

## agenda/agendas

## ages of people
Always use figures.  Hyphenate when a person's age is used as an adjective before a noun or as a replacement for a noun:
The 3-year-old girl.
The competition is for 10-year-olds.
John Doe, 6, was found playing in the park.
but:
That is a nine-year-old book.
That book is nine years old.

## all-
Use a hyphen with this prefix.
The program is all-encompassing one.

## alma mater

Use lowercase when describing the college one attended.

> My alma mater is Oregon State University.

Uppercase is reserved for the song and is placed in quotes: "Alma Mater"

## all right

Never "allright" or "alright."  (Note: "alright" is "alwrong.")

## alumna, alumnae, alumni, alumnus

alumna – singular, female alumnus – singular, male alumnae – plural, women only

alumni – plural, men only or men and women

alum – singular, male or female; appropriate only in informal contexts

Make sure the apostrophe turns the right direction, then state the year an alumnus or alumna received a degree:

> John Smith, AAOT '81
> Diana Hunter '74

## a.m., p.m.

Lowercase with periods.

> 3 p.m.

Try to avoid being redundant, as in:

> 3 p.m. in the afternoon

## among, between

In general, "between" refers to two items, "among" to three or more items. "Between" is correct, however, when expressing relationships of three or more items considered one pair at a time.

> The committee had to choose between two applicants.
> Choose courses from among the three groups: arts and letters, social science, and science.

but:

> The distances between the four corners of the quadrangle aren't equal.

## amount or number

"Amount" refers to volume or to a quantity you can't count. "Number" refers to things you can count. See "number."

> The speech caused a tremendous amount of controversy.

but:

> What's the largest number of students we can expect?

## ampersand (&)

Avoid using unless part of an official name.

## annual

Do not use unless it refers to an event that has happened at least two years in a row. Never use the term "first annual."

## anti-

Most words with this prefix do not require a hyphen unless the word begins with a capital, the meaning would be unclear, or the word has specific meanings of its own (e.g., antibiotic, anticlimax).

## apostrophe

The apostrophe often is used incorrectly. The most common misuses are inserting an apostrophe before the -s in a plural noun—where it doesn't belong—and omitting the apostrophe from a possessive noun, where it does.

> Prizes are awarded. (not Prize's are awarded.)

Have you seen the book's cover? (not have you seen the books cover?)

## ASCII

## Associate of Arts/Science/Applied Science

See "degrees."

## assure, ensure, insure

Use "assure" to give confidence or to inform positively:

She assured him that her statement was true.

Use "ensure" to mean guarantee or make certain:

Steps were taken to ensure the document's accuracy.

Use "insure" when referring to insurance:

The policy will insure your home.

## at this point in time

Wordy. Omit or use "now," "currently" or "at present."

Many students now live off campus.

Our enrollment currently stands at 17,300.

## AutoCAD®

## awards, fellowships, scholarship, loans

Capitalize when used with a formal name. Lowercase when referring to more than one award, scholarship or fellowship.

He applied for an Eldon Schafer Student Loan.

She applied for Eldon Schafer, Perkins, and Stafford loans.

## B

## baccalaureate, bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, bachelor's degree

See "academic degrees" for guidelines.

## backward

Not "backwards."

## basis/bases

The singular form is "basis." "Bases" is the plural.

## baseline

## B.C.

See A.D.

## between or among

See "among."

## biannual

Refers to twice each year. "Semiannual" also may be used.

## biennial

Refers to once every two years.

## Blue Mountain Community College

Spell out the first reference to Blue Mountain Community College. Use BMCC to abbreviate subsequent references. Do not use BM.

## BMCC
Abbreviation for Blue Mountain Community College.  Do not use "BM".

## board, board of education, board of directors
Capitalize when referring to the BMCC Board of Education or to the state board's formal name.
Otherwise, lowercase.

> the board of education
> the BMCC Board of Education (use board after first reference)
> the board of directors
> the board
> the Oregon Board of Education
> the state board of education

## bottom line
A cliché. Rewrite and use "result" or "outcome."

> What result do you expect? (not what's the bottom line?)

## building names
Always uppercase the first letters and use the full name.  Also look under "locations."

## burnout

## C

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## C++

## CADKEY

## campuswide

## canceled (not cancelled)

## carpal tunnel syndrome

## catalog (not catalogue)
See "college publications."

## CD-ROM, CD-ROMs
No apostrophe for the plural.

## centers
These no longer are referred to as "Extended Learning centers," but are now "Community Education centers." Capitalize the full, official
name,  and use the full name unless the context is clear.

> Hermiston Center
> Milton-Freewater Center
> the center

When referring to more than one center, do not capitalize the word "center."

> The BMCC Board of Education will meet at Benton and Sweet Home centers next month.

## certificates
Capitalize the name of a certificate, but not the word "certificate."

> EMT certificate

> GED certificate
> Oregon Radiology certificate
> a one-year certificate in …

## chair

As a leadership title, preferred over "chairman, chairwoman or chairperson." For capitalization, see "titles of people."

## checklist

## checkout, check out

One word if it is a noun; two words if it is a verb.

> Checkout is at 11 a.m.
> You may check out four books.

## class identification of graduates

Follow these examples:

> John Doe AAOT–'81, BS–'83, MA–'89
> Jane Doe PhD–'94

## co-

Use a hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status; do not hyphenate in other combinations:

co-author, co-worker, coeducational, cocurricular, cooperate.

## COBOL

## co-chair

## co-curricular activities

## coed

Although obsolete as a reference to female students, coed is still commonly used as an adjective meaning "male and female."

> Coed residence halls have floors reserved alternately for men and women.

## college

When referring to Blue Mountain Community College, capitalize "college" only when the full name is used.

> Blue Mountain Community College has many outstanding instructors.
> The college has many outstanding instructors.

## college-level classes

## college publications

The full title of any official BMCC publication should be capitalized.

> the BMCC Schedule of Classes
> the BMCC General Catalog the BMCC catalog

but:

> the general catalog

## colloquium/colloquiums

Colloquium is singular; colloquiums is plural.

## colon

The colon is often used to introduce a list or series.  However, it's redundant to use a colon directly after such verbs as "are" and "include."

> Three types of examinations are offered: oral, take-home, and in-class.

but:

    The course offerings include Spanish, marine biology, and medieval history.


## comma

Use commas to separate all items in a series of three or more.

    The university awards bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

    The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures offers courses in Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish.

Omit commas before and after Jr., Sr. and the designations I, II, III and IV as part of a name.

## commencement

Capitalize only when referring to a specific commencement.

    Participants in the June 2005 Commencement sweltered in the heat.

## committees, councils, teams, groups

Official names of committees and organizations should be capitalized. Informal references to committees should be lowercase.

    The Dental Assistant Advisory Committee

    the advisory committee

    the program's advisory committee

    the Budget Committee

    a leadership team

    the administrative staff the

    President's Staff

    College Council

    the BMCC Alumni Association

## competence or competency

Competence means "skill" or "ability." Competency generally refers to a specific skill in a specific area.

    This test measures your degree of competence in Spanish.

but:

    The dental program is designed to achieve the competencies established by the American Dental Association.

## competency-based credits

## computer terms

See individual words.

## continual or continuous

Continual means "repeated steadily" or "over and over." Continuous means "uninterrupted," "steady," or "unbroken."

    The Beavers and the Ducks are continual rivals.

    A continuous stream of students crossed the campus.

## couple

Nonstandard as an adjective.  Don't forget the "of."

    The deadline is just a couple of days away.

not:

    The deadline is just a couple days away.

## course/class titles

Official course titles should be capitalized and should appear without quotation marks, italics or any

other formatting. Do not capitalize incomplete titles.

>Students are advised to take ENG 108 World Literature.
>Students are advised to take a world literature class.

## course work

Two words.

## credit

In general, use "credits" rather than "credit hours, hours, term credits, quarter credits, or term hours." Write the number of credits in figures unless it is the first word in a sentence.

>This course is worth 3 credits.
>Four-credit courses are now the norm.

## Credit by Examination

## criterion (s.), criteria (pl.)

The singular form is "criterion." "Criteria" is the plural.

## cross section cross trained

Two words unless used as an adjective, then use a hyphen

>cross-trained employees

## cum laude

See "Latin honors."

## curriculum (s.), curricula (pl.)

The singular form is "curriculum." "Curricula" is the plural.

## cutback (n., adj.), cut back (verb)

One word when used as a noun or adjective; two words when used as a verb

## cutoff (n., adj.), cut off (verb)

One word when a noun or adjective, as in "the cutoff date"; two words when a verb.

## cutting edge

A cliché. Be more specific, if possible.

>The designer's use of computer tools to develop her design puts her at the forefront of her field.

not:

>The designer is at the cutting edge of her field.

## course work (not coursework)

## cyber-

No hyphen is needed with this prefix.

>cyberspace

## D

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## dashes — em and en

Dashes are not hyphens. The em dash is longer than a hyphen and indicates a break in the syntax of a sentence. Leave no spaces.

>Of the three grading options—graded only, pass/no pass only, either graded or pass/no pass—
>the last option is the default.

The en dash is identical to a hyphen in typewritten copy. In printed copy, however, it's half as long as an em dash.  Use an en dash to indicate continuing or inclusive numbers in dates, times, or reference numbers.

1998–99
            50 B.C.–A.D. 45
            10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
            pp. 12–28
The en dash sometimes replaces a hyphen for clarification.
            post–Civil War
            mid–twentieth century

## data processing

Do not hyphenate the adjective: data processing programs

## datum (s.), data (pl.)

The singular form is "datum."  The plural noun is "data."

## database

Not "data base" or "data-base."

## dates

Use commas to set off the year when using full dates:
            She began her studies on September 1, 1979, and completed them on May 12, 1983.
Do not use commas when using only the month and year:
            She began her studies in September 1979 and completed them in May 1983.
Do not use 1st, 2nd, etc., with dates:
            July 21, April 2, etc. (NOT July 21st, April 2nd, etc.)
Use the year only if it is not the current calendar year:
            If publishing in May 1998: Joan Jones graduated in December 1997; or Joe Smith graduated in
January.
*inclusive dates:*
Use an en dash (or a hyphen, if an en dash is unavailable) for continuing or inclusive numbers, but do
not use a hyphen as a substitute for the word "to." Leave no space on either side of the dash.
            She taught in the chemistry department from 1995 to 1999.
not:
            She taught in the chemistry department from 1995–1999.
            The 1999–2000 academic year concluded with fair-weather graduation ceremonies. (Note: use
            2000 instead of '00 for this academic year only; after that, use 2000–01.)

## days of the week or months

Write out months or days of the week unless space is too limited.
            The class meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
but:
            Mon., April 6
            Tues., April 7

## deal with

Too vague. Try to use a more specific verb such as cover, examine, include, or explore.
            This course explores the history and development of freedom of speech.
not:
            This course deals with free speech.

## decision makers (noun)

Two words when used as a noun.
            Decision making sometimes is difficult.

## decision-making (adj.)

Hyphenate when used as an adjective.

>> The department must go through a decision-making process.
>> He has excellent decision-making skills.

but:

>> The group does a lot of decision making.

## degrees

See "academic degrees."

## degrees with distinction

Lowercase: cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude

## department names

See "academic departments and programs."

## desktop

## desktop computer

## DeskWriter

## developing country

Use instead of "Third World country."

## diacritical marks (accents)

Words in other languages, and even a few adopted into English, sometimes have special marks above or beneath certain letters that provide help in pronunciation or meaning. There are five commonly diacritical marks used in Romance and Germanic languages when they are written in the same Latin alphabet we use in English. These can be created in the desktop publishing program we use in the Marketing Office. If you cannot create them, please mark the appropriate letters on the hard copy you turn in.

## dialogue

Often misused as a verb, this noun refers to conversations between two or more parties.

>> We need to discuss [not dialogue about] the new building plans.

## disc

Correct spelling except for computer-related references.

>> compact disc, laserdisc, etc.

## diseases

Use lowercase unless the disease is known by the name of a person, and then capitalize only the individual's name.

>> Parkinson's disease
>> carpal tunnel syndrome

## disk

This spelling is used for a disk on which computer data can be stored—for instance, a floppy disk.

## distance ed classes

(not "distant ed" classes; "distance education" classes is an even better choice)

## district

The  BMCC district

## ditto marks

Don't use them. Spell out the words.

### diversity

Think before you use it, as it's becoming trite. If it's an important part of your message, consider using alternatives such as variety, differences, heterogeneity, or multiformity.

### divisions (academic)

Lowercase unless part of the name of a specific division, as in the Math and Science Division. See Administrative and Academic Units.

> He works in the Student Services Division.
> He works in Student Services.
> What division do you work in?

### documents/reports/titles

See "titles of publications."

### driver's license

### dropout rate

### DVD

## E

### eBay

### editor in chief (s.), editors in chief (pl.)

### EdNet

### effect, affect

See "affect, effect."

### effectively or in effect

Effectively is an adverb describing how the action of the verb takes place. It isn't synonymous with the parenthetical phrase in effect.

> The committee members worked together effectively.
> By giving higher education $10 million more but asking the faculty to teach the same number of students, the legislature is, in effect
> [not effectively], cutting our budget.

### e.g.,

The abbreviation e.g. stands for "exempli gratia," meaning "for example" and is like the phrase "such as." It should have a period after each letter and should be followed by a comma.

> Several majors (e.g., business administration, economics, and engineering) require strong mathematics backgrounds.

### electronic addresses

It is critical that both URLs and Internet addresses be copied exactly—including punctuation, capitalization, and spacing. Place the address in italics, and try not to break the address. If you must break it, do it before a slash or a period.

> URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. It is the address of a World Wide Web document.
> For example, the URL for the BMCC home page is http://bluecc.edu

### ellipsis/ellipses

Use ellipses sparingly and only when specific words are understood. Ellipses are spaced dots indicating that something has been omitted from a quotation. Use three spaced dots if less than a sentence has

been omitted. Add a period if a sentence or more has been omitted or to end your sentence with the ellipsis.

### e-mail
Abbreviated term for electronic mail.  Do not capitalize unless it is the first word in a sentence.

### emerita (singlular, feminine), emeritae (plural, feminine)
Use only when referring to a woman or group of women.

### emeritus (singular), emeriti (plural)
Use for men or for a group of men and women.

### emeritus professor/emeritus professors

### employ
Reserve this verb for what employers do.
>    The university employs thousands of faculty and staff members.

but:
>    He used [not employed] three equations to solve the problem.

### employee (not employe)

### end user (noun)

### end-user (adjective)

### ensure
See the entry for "assure, ensure, insure."

### entry-level (adj.), entry level (adv.)
>    It was an entry-level job.

but:
>    The salary was entry level.

### ESOL
This stands for "English for speakers of other languages."

### etc.
The abbreviation "etc."  adds no information,  so leave it out.
>    Submit a printing revision form to change such publication details as quantity, ink color, and paper stock.

not:
>    Submit a printing revision form to change quantity, ink color, paper stock, etc.

### Ethernet

### events
Capitalize college events:
>    Fall Inservice
>    Spring Days

### every day (noun), everyday (adj.)
Use "every day" as a noun. "Everyday" is an adjective meaning ordinary or common.
>    It rains almost every day.
>    Rain is an everyday occurrence.

### exams
See "tests."

## experiential

Jargon.  Specify the type of experience.

These internships provide practical field experience. (not these internships are experiential.)

## extension (telephone)

Write as "ext." followed by the number.

## F

___

## the fact that

Wasted words. Omit them.

## facsimile (fax)

Lowercase unless it begins a sentence.  For how to write a fax number, see "telephone" and "facsimile" under "numbers."

## faculty/faculties

Faculty is a singular noun and requires a singular verb unless there is more than one faculty. It refers to a collective body of people.

The college faculty is large.

but:

The faculties at the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Portland State University differ greatly.

Use faculty member (singular) or faculty members (plural) to refer to individuals.

Consult your adviser or another faculty member in your department.

The advisory group consists of four faculty members and one student.

## faculty association

Capitalize when part of the name of a specific organization, as the BMCC Faculty Association.

## faculty member/faculty members

## fall

See "seasons."

## fall term

See "term."

## fax

Short for "facsimile." Lowercase unless it begins a sentence.

## federal

Lowercase unless part of a formal name.

## feedback

Jargon.  Use "response, results, evaluation, report, data, or opinion."

Say "We value your opinions," not "Your feedback is needed."

## feel

Reserve this verb for sensory or emotional feelings; use "think" or "believe" elsewhere.

I feel queasy.

but:

I think that . . . . or I believe that . . . .

## fellowship

See "award."

**fewer**

See "less vs. fewer."

**field of study**

See "academic degrees."

**fieldwork (not field work)**

**first-come, first-served, a first-come, first-served basis**

This is the correct form of this cliché, but you would do better to rewrite the idea.

Early applicants receive top priority.

not:

Acceptance of applications is on a first-come, first-served basis.

**first-year students**

**fiscal year 2004; FY 2004**

**flier (not flyer)**

**follow-up report**

**foreign language**

Do not use. Say "second language."

**foreign student**

Do not use. Say "international student."

**former, acting**

See acting, former.

**forms**

Capitalize the name, but not the word "form."

Fill out a Request for Enrollment form.

**freshman/freshmen**

**freshman class/freshman classes**

Not "freshmen classes."

**from, to**

Use together, i.e., write either as "10–20" or "from 10 to 20," not "from 10–20."

**full time, full-time (adj.)**

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

She goes to school full time.

She is a full-time student.

full-time equivalent

**fund**

BMCC's General Fund

the general fund

general fund monies

**fund raising (n.), fund-raising (adj.), fund-raiser (n.)**

Follow these examples:

Fund raising is difficult.

They planned a fund-raising campaign.

A fund-raiser was hired.

# G

## gender or sex

These words are not interchangeable. Use "gender" to refer to sexual identity, especially in relation to society or culture. Use "sex" to refer to biological categories. See also the usage note under "gender" in the American Heritage Electronic Dictionary.

> Is your sex male or female?

One might identify with a gender that is different from his or her sex.

## the general budget

## the general fund

## the BMCC General Fund

## governance structure

## government

Capitalize the full formal names of documents, programs, laws, agreements and programs resulting from them.

> In connection with the Federal Privacy Act of 1974, Section 7 (b), when disclosure of the social security number …

## GPA

See "grade point average."

## grade report

Two words, no hyphen.

## grades

Use a letter grade without quotation marks.

> He received a B in history.
> She received two A's and three B's.
> Courses are graded A, B, C, D, F, P (pass), NP (no pass), or IN (incomplete).

## grade point average

Spell out on first reference, then use "GPA" on second reference. Do not use "gpa," or "G.P.A." Use two digits after the decimal when stating a grade point average:

> 2.50 (not 2.5)
> 4.00 (not 4.0)

## gray (not grey)

## groundskeeping personnel


# H

## half-time secretary

## hard copy

## head up

Jargon. Use "direct" or "lead."

> Experienced river guides lead [not head up] the raft expeditions.

## Hewlett-Packard or HP

**high-tech**
> high-tech companies

**home page**

**homework**

**honor roll**

Lowercase in all uses.
> She is on the honor roll.

**hopefully**

An adverb that describes how the action of the verb takes place. It isn't synonymous with "I hope, we hope, or it is hoped."
> He opened his grade report hopefully.
> I hope [not Hopefully,] this will be published before school starts.

**hyphenated words (capitalization of)**

Do NOT capitalize the second word in a hyphenated word.
> Follow-up Survey

not:
> Follow-Up Survey

**hyphens**

Don't use a hyphen in a compound noun with "vice":
> vice chancellor
> vice president
> vice provost

Compound adjectives should be hyphenated to eliminate ambiguity of meaning. Otherwise, leave open.
> first class mail
> long lasting effect

but:
> fast-sailing ship

Adverbs ending in -ly followed by an adjective are not hyphenated:
> a highly complex issue

Use a hyphen to distinguish confusing pairs of words.
> recreation (but re-creation)
> refund (but re-fund, meaning "to fund again.")

Use a hyphen after "full" or "well" when it's used in a compound modifier immediately before a noun, unless the word itself is modified.
> a full-page advertisement
> a well-known professor

but:
> a color full page advertisement
> a very well-known professor

Don't use a hyphen when the modifier is in other positions in the sentence:
> She works full time.
> Although well known, the landmark is rarely visited.

Use a hyphen when using pro- to coin a word indicating support (e.g., "pro-feminist").

"After" requires a hyphen when used to form a compound adjective but not when it's part of a *compound noun:*
> after-dinner speech

but:

afterglow and afternoon

Hyphenate an age when used as an adjective, even if the noun the adjective modifies is only implied rather than stated.

the five-year-old program

The 5-year-old [child] attended kindergarten.

Hyphenate the noun "co-op" when abbreviating "cooperative," but don't hyphenate "cooperate," "coordinate", or "coeducational."

# I

## i.e.

The abbreviation "i.e.: stands for "id est," meaning "that is." Use it when you want to restate something in a different way. It should have a period after each letter and should be followed by a comma.

The BMCC Telephone Directory is provided free to BMCC employees (i.e., faculty members, administrators, and classified staff).

## importantly

Nonstandard except as an adverb. Use "important."

The clown strutted importantly.

but:

More important [not More importantly], we need to have the money within the next two weeks.

## inclusive language

Try to communicate in a manner that does not exclude particular individuals or groups. Here are some guidelines for appropriate references to members of distinctive groups.

*age*

In written materials intended for a general audience, avoid references that assume college and university students are between the ages of

18 and 22.

*disability*

When writing about individuals with disabilities, use "person first" language; i.e., "person who uses a wheelchair." Similarly, "blind students" would be preferable to "the blind." Do not capitalize "blind," "deaf," or any other term relating to people with disabilities.

Special arrangements may be made for students with hearing, vision, learning, or physical disabilities.

Parking for persons with disabilities should be referred to as "disability parking," not "handicap parking."

*race and ethnicity*

Current practice and preference is to style the names of non-European Americans without hyphens.

African American (Americans of African descent), but "Afro-Americans"

Asian American (Americans of Asian descent)

European American (Americans of European descent)

Native American

American Indian (descendants of the original North, South, and Central Americans)

Caucasian (commonly used to refer to anyone with light skin)

Latino/Latina (people of Latin American descent)

people of color (for any non-European Americans and their descendants)

In informal writing, where specific racial and ethnic identification would seem stilted, the terms black and white are sometimes preferable with reference to individuals of African American and European American ancestry. Note that these terms are used both as nouns and adjectives.  In both cases, they represent distinct groups of people.  However, the terms are not proper nouns and, hence, are not capitalized.

> Whether you're black or white, there's no question that we all notice skin color—especially when it's different from our own.

*sex and gender*

Avoid using she/he and his/her. Instead, use plurals. If the singular must be used, use both pronouns, joined by a conjunction.

> To be academically successful, students need to practice good study skills.

> If a student is ill, she or he should notify the appropriate professors immediately.

Another alternative, when its use is appropriate, is the second person:

> You will need to purchase your campus parking permit during the first week of the new semester.

*sexual orientation*

To avoid the appearance of bias based on sexual orientation, avoid "acknowledged," "admitted," or "avowed" as adjectives preceding the words "homosexual," "lesbian," "bisexual," "gay," or "heterosexual." Preferred phrasings include openly gay or gay.  Use transgender, not transgendered. Note that most individuals with a same-sex orientation prefer lesbian or gay over homosexual.

*stereotypes*

Remember the prime directive: Write about people as individuals, not as members of some stereotypical group.

## in-house

Hyphenate when used as an adjective.

## initials

Use periods after each initial, but no space.

> I.M. Burley

## innovative

A cliché.  Is it really true of your program?  If so, rewrite the text to illustrate how it is innovative.

## in order to

Wordy. You can usually omit "in order."

> We laugh to [not in order to] keep from crying.

## input

Jargon except in reference to computers.  Use information or opinion.

We value your opinions about this project (not your input is needed).

## inservice

## instructional assistant

Lower case

## Instructor

## insure

See "assure, ensure, insure."

## interdisciplinary

## interim

Lowercase in all cases. An interim job title in academia is a position to which a person is appointed between the times an incumbent of a position steps down until a new person is hired to fill that position permanently.

## interface

In the context of computers, this is fine. For people, use "communicate" or "talk."

> The committee members need to communicate [not interface] with one other.

## international student

Use in place of "foreign student."

## Internet

Always capitalize when discussing the worldwide network of computers. On second reference "the Net" may be used.

## intranet

## intra-quarter

## involve

Too vague. Use a more specific verb such as "cover," "include," or "explore."

> The course examines how employment legislation pertains to affirmative-action and equal-employment opportunity
>
> (not The course involves employment legislation and human resources policies).

## irregardless

Do not use! Use "regardless."

> Regardless [not Irregardless] of the frigid temperature, the students wore shorts in the snow.

## italics

See "titles of publications" for appropriate use of italics.

Italics are also used for foreign words that are unfamiliar. Words that were originally borrowed from another language but have been permanently added to the English language (i.e., if they're in the dictionary) should not be italicized:

> glasnost
>
> hors d'oeuvres

Use specific, concrete language rather than italics, capitals, or quotation marks for emphasis.

> This committee consists of two, not three, people.

not:

> This committee is composed of two [TWO] people.

## it's, its

"It's" is a contraction for "it is" or "it has."

> It's rainy today.

"Its" is a possessive form of the pronoun "it."

> The college raised its admission requirements.

## J

## JavaScript

## Job positions and titles

Capitalize job titles only when they immediately precede the individual's name or when they are named positions or honorary titles. Descriptive titles, as opposed to formal or academic titles, are not capitalized.

>It's common knowledge that President Franklin Roosevelt loved his dog.
>The president, George W. Bush, took the oath of office under cloudy skies.
>The president of the United States serves a four-year term of office.
>Jon Jones, a music professor, does not teach in the summer.
>When U.S. Representative Peter Defazio visited BMCC, he was impressed.
>BMCC's vice president for student affairs uses a variety of means to improve students' lives.
>Jim Jones of engineering has been promoted.

Also see "occupational descriptions."

## judgment (not judgement)

## K

## kickoff (n.), kick-off (adj.), kick off (v.)

>We're having the kickoff next week.
>We should have a kick-off party.
>We'll kick off the campaign with a party.

## L

## lab work

## laptop (adj., n.)

One word, no hyphen.

>laptop computer, a laptop

## Latin honors

Latin honors are written in italics but not capitalized.

>cum laude "with honors"
>magna cum laude "with high honors"
>summa cum laude "with highest honors"

## leading edge

A cliché.  Try to avoid using it.

## Learning Community

## lecture/lab classes (not lecture-lab classes)

## lecture/discussion format

## less vs. fewer

In general, less refers to a quantity you can't count. Fewer refers to units you can count, but less can be used for degree, quantity, or extent when countable items aren't being considered individually.

>I have less money than you.

but:

>I have fewer dimes than you.

The campaign raised less than $500.

## library

Capitalize only when part of a proper name; otherwise use lowercase.  The formal title of our library is the BMCC Library.

## lifelong learning

## like

Means "similar to." Use "such as" instead of "like" to introduce examples.

This question is like that one.

but:

The interior uses brown tones such as [not like] beige, taupe, and rust.

## list

Use parentheses with a numbered list, as in:

Please buy the following: (1) apples, (2) oranges, and (3) bananas.

For a list within a sentence, separate items with commas (or with semicolons if the items in the list include commas).

The roommates came from Boise, Idaho; Boulder, Colorado; Buffalo, New York; and Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

For vertical lists, introduce items with numbers only when the order matters. Otherwise, use bullets.

If you are the first one to spot a fire:

1. Close your office door behind you.
2. Find and pull the nearest fire alarm.
3. Leave the building via the nearest stairwell.

If any or all of the items in a vertical list are complete sentences, punctuate all items in the list with periods. If no items are sentences, follow each with a comma and end the list with a period if the list completes a sentence, or omit punctuation at the end of each item, including the last one.

This course has several graded projects:

- a midterm test
- a final exam
- a team project
- a research paper
- a weekly log for analyzing your field work

If the sentence introducing the list is a complete sentence, it can end in a period or a colon, whichever seems appropriate ("the following" and "as follows" require a colon). If the introductory material is not a complete sentence, use the punctuation mark that's appropriate for the context, whether that's a comma, semicolon, dash, or nothing at all.

When you move to college for the first time, you usually

- bring too many things for your dorm room,
- forget a few essential items,
- bring and forget many of the same things as your roommate, and
- wish your parents would take off as soon as the family SUV is unpacked.

## linked courses

## listserv

## local budget law

## locations (buildings, centers, labs, rooms)

Blue Mountain Community College
the college

Business Building
Pioneer Hall
Morrow Hall
The Student Learning Center
The Service Center
Room P-132 (Don't use room numbers unless it is unavoidable; these can change.)
the computer lab
skills lab (Nursing Program)
the BMCC Library
the library
the Boardroom

## login, logon, logoff

## long-term goals

## lower-division credits

## M

## Macintosh

## magna cum laude
See "Latin honors."

## mailing addresses
Use the following abbreviations with an address number.  If an address number isn't used, don't abbreviate.

Ave. /Avenue
Blvd./Boulevard
BMCC is located at 2411 NW Carden Ave.

but:

BMCC is on Carden Avenue.

General references to streets, roads, avenues, and places, aren't capitalized.

In Corvallis most numbered roadways are avenues.
In Albany, numbered roadways usually are either streets or places.

ZIP code stands for Zoning Improvement Plan code. Unless it begins a sentence, ZIP should be in small capitals.  Use lowercase letters if small capitals aren't available.

## majors
See "academic majors."

## management information system (not MIS)

## measurements
Spell out all terms of measurement in the text:

inches
miles
millimeters
minutes
kilometers
percent
pounds

## medium (s.), media (pl.)

The plural form of "medium" is "media."

> The media often cover special events at BMCC.

## midterm, midterms

## mid-Willamette Valley

## midyear

## momentarily

"Momentarily" means "for the duration of a moment" or "briefly." When you mean "after a brief period of time has elapsed," use "soon" or "in a few minutes" or "any time now."

> The swimmer surfaced momentarily to take a breath.

but:

> The dean will be able to see you soon.

## months

Spell out the names of months in text when they are not accompanied by a specific date. Spell them out when they accompanied by a year.

> The fall semester begins in August.
> In December 2000 Arkansas had a terrible ice storm.

The following months are abbreviated in text when accompanied by a date: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

> The next club meeting is Monday, Nov. 12, 2001.
> Graduation will be held on May 18, 2002.

## more than, over

These two aren't interchangeable.  In general, "over" refers to spatial relationships. "More than" refers to a quantity or to units you can count, but over can be used for degree, quantity, or extent when countable items aren't being considered individually.

> The bear went over the mountain.
> The United Way raised more than $50,000.
> It will take more than nickels and dimes to reach our goal.
> I have more than enough work to do.

## multi-

In general, no hyphen is needed after "multi"constructions.

> multicultural
> multipurpose building
> multifaceted
> multimedia
> multidisciplinary

## N

## the Net

Short for "the Internet"; all right for second use.

## never-ending (adj.), never ending (adv.)

> It was a never-ending job.
> The chores seemed never ending.

## non-

Most words beginning with the prefix "non" do not require a hyphen. Exceptions are cases where the following word is a proper noun or where the resulting word would be confusing.

> non-English
> noncredit classes
> nondegree classes
> nondiscriminatory
> nongraduates
> nonmajors
> nonpaid
> nonpunitive
> nonrestrictive
> nonscience majors
> nontraditional
> nonprofit (may also use not-for-profit)

## number (noun)

You can judge whether it requires a singular or plural verb by the article that precedes it. "The number" requires a singular verb; "a number" requires a plural verb.

> The number of international students is growing.

but:

> A number of staff members are attending a retreat.

## numbers

*cardinal numbers*

Spell out figures from one through nine except in scientific matter dealing with physical quantity or when speaking of academic credit, course numbers, or an individual's age. Always use figures with percent.

> one course
> two sequences
> four terms

but:

> 3 credits
> HIST 101
> 5 percent
> The child is 3 years old.

Write numbers 10 and higher as numerals.

> There were more than 70 students in ENG 102 last term.

Write out numbers at the beginning of a sentence, or rewrite the sentence so that it doesn't begin with a number.

> Nine thousand students registered for winter-term classes.
> The enrollment for winter term was 9,000 students.

*dates*

Also see "months."

Don't use a comma in dates that give only the month and year.

> January 1995

Use two commas to set off the year in dates giving the month, day, and year.

> Does July 5, 1909, ring a bell?

Use an en-dash instead of a hyphen between the first and second number to denote inclusive dates.

When the century or the millennium changes, all the digits are repeated.

> The 1999–2000 catalog is available in Morrow Hall.
> This course isn't offered until 2006-7.

When writing inclusive dates between 2001 and 2009, don't include the 0 after the en-dash.

> The professor will be on leave during 2003–4.

Except in formal invitations, use cardinal rather than ordinal numbers for the date.

> The ceremony is scheduled for October 16, 2007.

but:

> You are cordially invited to attend the Inauguration of the President of the United States on the Sixteenth of January two thousand and one.

In general, don't use "on" with a date or day. Occasionally you need to include "on" to avoid confusion.

> Commencement will be Saturday, June 12.

but:

> He performed on August 12, 2002.

*full-time equivalent (FTE)*

Enrollment and employment statistics are often stated in terms of full-time equivalents (FTE). Use only one digit after the decimal point.

> 1.0 FTE is full time
> 0.5 FTE is half time

*money*

Use figures for fractional amounts over one dollar. Use zeros after the decimal point for whole-dollar amounts only when they appear in the same context with fractional amounts.

The ticket prices are $5.00 for general admission, $3.50 for students, and $4.25 for senior citizens.

> $7.95
> $2
> $10
> $579
> $4,020
> $100,000
> $1.5 million

In tables, use one format—either with or without decimals—consistently. Use a label (e.g., "dollars") to avoid repeating the same symbol (e.g., $) over and over.

*more than, fewer than*

Don't use "over" or "under" when referring to numbers; use "more than" or "fewer than." "Over" and "under" refer to spatial relationships. "More than" and "fewer than" refer to quantity or to units you can count.

> More than 16,000 students received the letters.
> Fewer than a dozen students received the letters.

*ordinal numbers*

Unless space is too limited, spell out ordinal numbers. Ordinal numbers are never spelled out in the BMCC catalog.

> one thousandth
> eighteenth-century literature

*percent*

Percent is one word. Always use figures with it. Use decimals, not fractions. The % symbol may be used in scientific data or tables.

> 8.25 percent (not 8-1/4 percent)

*telephone and facsimile numbers*

In your writing, tailor telephone numbers to your audience. Every phone number on the Pendleton campus begins with area code (541) followed by the three-digit prefix 278-, then four additional digits. On-campus phone calls require only the last four digits. The same principles apply to facsimile (fax) numbers. To write the number of an extension, use "ext. XXXX."

> 5396 (to an on-campus colleague)

For publications sent off campus, put the area code in parentheses followed by the entire seven-digit number. Include the 1 when writing 1-800 numbers.

> (541) 346-5396 (not 541-346-5396)
> 1-(800) 232-3825 (not 800.232.3825)

When including an area code, separate the area code with parentheses and put a space between the area code and the phone number:

> (555) 555-5555

## numerals

Spell out zero through nine.
Use numerals for 10 and greater.
Use a comma with numerals of 1,000 and above (except dates): 5,000, 42,000.
Exceptions to the rules:

> Use numerals when referring to academic credit: The student earned 2.5 hours of credit.
> Use numerals when referring to a page number: The passage begins on page 5.

# O

## occupational descriptions

Occupational descriptions, as opposed to formal, academic or administrative titles, are not capitalized.

> When master chef Chuck Tubbins met with culinary arts students last week, they served him a feast.
> Larry Lugnut, diesel mechanic, is on several advisory boards.

Also see "job positions and titles."

## occurred, occurring

## off-campus (adj.), off campus (adv.)

Hyphenate when used as an adjective:

> It was an off-campus activity.

Write two words, without hyphenation when used as an adverb:

> The activity took place off campus.

## offered (not offerred)

## office

Capitalize when part of an official name:

> She submitted her story to the Office of Instruction
> She submitted her story to the Administration Office.
> Academic Affairs Office (NOT the Office of Academic Affairs)

Use lowercase in all other uses:

> He visited the dean's office.

## offline

One word when discussing computer connections.

> It was an offline class.

The class was offered offline.

## off-site (adj.), off site (adv.)

Hyphenate when used as an adjective:

It was an off-site field trip.

Write two words, without hyphenation when used as an adverb:

The activity took place off site.

## on-campus (adj.), on campus (adv.)

Hyphenate when used as an adjective:

It was an on-campus activity.

Write two words, without hyphenation when used as an adverb:

The activity took place on campus.

## one-on-one

The program offers one-on-one training.

## one-year certificate

## ongoing

The institute supports ongoing research.

## online (adj., adv.)

One word when discussing computer connections.

He was doing online research. He was doing research online.

## onscreen (adj.), on screen (adv.)

Onscreen instructions are helpful.

It is more difficult to find mistakes on screen.

## on-site (adj.), on site (adv.)

Hyphenate when used as an adjective:

It was an on-site activity.

Write two words without hyphenation when used as an adverb:

The activity took place on site.

## open-entry, open-exit (adj.); open entry, open exit (adv.)

open-entry classes

open-exit classes

The classes are classified as open entry.

All his classes classified as open exit.

## organizations, fraternities, sororities

The formal name, Phi Theta Kappa, should be used on first reference. The abbreviation PTK is acceptable on second reference. A person belonging to PTK is a "member," not a brother or sister.

## output

Jargon except in reference to computers.  Use "results" elsewhere.

What results [not output] do you expect?

## over, more than

See "more than, over."

**P**

## Parentheses

Use parentheses sparingly.  Don't enclose entire sentences in parentheses. Parentheses can be used for enumeration within the text as follows:

(1) carbohydrates, (2) fat, (3) protein, (4) vitamins

For enumeration with periods, see "Numbers."

Parentheses sometimes enclose brief explanatory abbreviations.

Pioneer Hall (formerly the Learning Center) houses the BMCC Library.

The writing requirements for an associate's degree include English Composition (WR 121) and English Composition (WR 122).

## part time, part-time

Hyphenate only when used as a compound modifier

He has a part-time job.

She works part time.

## Pentium

## percent/percentage

One word, always spelled out.

"Percent" is singular when used alone or when a singular word is the object of "of."

Nearly 80 percent of the money was spent.

Exactly 80 percent is required.

Percent is plural when a plural word is the object of "of."

More than 40 percent of the courses are at the graduate level.

Percentage is always singular.

A percentage of the profits is all I want.

Always write percentages as numerals (even if they are less than 10), but spell out the word "percent."

The college saw a 4 percent increase in enrollment.

She received a grade of 90 percent on her test.

## person, people (not persons)

"Persons" is too often an awkward replacement for people.

Keep telling yourself as well as other people [not persons] that we have a problem we can solve together.

## phenomenon (s.), phenomena (pl.) Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)

See "organizations, fraternities, sororities."

## phone numbers

See "telephone numbers."

## Physical Plant

Capitalize when referring to BMCC.

## plug-in (n.)

When referring to computers.

## plurals:

*abbreviations and acronyms*

Plurals of abbreviations and acronyms are formed by adding an "s" alone.

AAs, AAOTs and Dental Program candidates will meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow

Don't use a solidus (slash) or a parenthetical (s) to cover two options. It's better to write out the choice, choose one option yourself, or rewrite the sentence to avoid the problem.

>If you know who the owner is, give it back to him or her. (not him/her)
>Send me the appropriate number of tickets. (not ticket[s] or ticket/s)
>Some students still haven't declared a major by their junior year.

not:

>Not every student has decided what s/he wants to major in by his/her junior year.

*plural nouns*

Don't use apostrophes in plural nouns.  This includes dates such as 1870s and 1990s. The only time you need to use an apostrophe in forming a plural is to avoid ambiguity, e.g., if you're writing about letter grades, use the apostrophe to distinguish A's from the word "As."

>ifs, ands, or buts

but:

>do's and don'ts

*collective nouns*

When using the following nouns, be aware of whether you're referring to the word as a single unit (singular) or as individual items (plural).

>The committee meets every Thursday.
>Three inches is the recommended margin.
>Sixteen dollars and four cents is the total.

but:

>The group members argue among themselves.
>The committee members express differing views. Inches are shorter than feet.
>Sixteen dollar bills and four pennies are in the jar.

## plus

Use only in adding units. Otherwise, use in addition, also, or and.

>Earning 4 credits in biology plus 8 credits in physics fulfills the science requirement.

but:

>Transfer students may need to take an entrance examination and [not plus] additional course work.

## p.m., a.m.

See "a.m., p.m."

## possessives

*possessive nouns*

Things as well as people can be possessive.

>a master's degree
>a month's pay
>today's Commuter

*possessive pronouns*

"His, its, hers, theirs, yours, ours," and "whose" are possessive pronouns; they do not contain apostrophes.

"It's" is not a possessive pronoun; it is a contraction of "it is."

>The book's ending is better than its beginning.

but:

>It's kind of you to ask.

## post-

Most words with this prefix do not require a hyphen unless the second word begins with a capital or the meaning would be unclear.

>postbaccalaureate, postgraduate, post-Vietnam, post-Renaissance.

## practicum (s.), practicums (pl.)

## pre-

Most words with this prefix do not require a hyphen.

>prepharmacy, prelaw, preadmission, prescreened

## presenter

Not presentor.

## presently

Means "soon."  Use now, currently, or at present when you mean "at this time."

>Many students live off campus now.
>At present the enrollment stands at 17,300.

## president

Capitalize "president" only as a formal title before a name.

>President Cam Preus

Use lowercase in all other instances.

>A reception will be held at the president's home.
>A reception will be held at the home of BMCC's president.

## prior or before

"Prior" is correct when used as an adjective meaning "earlier in time or place." Otherwise use "before."

>Prior approval is required.

but:

>Take algebra before you take calculus.
>Turn it in before noon.
>Don't put the cart before the horse.

## problem solving (n.), problem-solving (adj.)

>She was good at problem solving.
>She was a good problem solver.
>We held a problem-solving session.

## professional technical programs (lowercase)

## professor

There are three basic academic ranks: assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Capitalize these titles as a formal title before a name:

>Professor Alison Timmons is teaching that class.

Lowercase in all other cases:

>Alison Timmons is a professor of English.

Also see "titles of people" and "academic titles."

## professor emeritus (s.), professors emeriti (pl.)

## programs

Capitalize the name of specific programs and the word "program."  Otherwise, use lowercase.

>the After Four Program
>the GED Program

the 2 + 2 Program (leave a space on either side of the +.)
the program; the programs
an advanced placement program

## publications

See "titles of publications."

## punctuation

See specific punctuation headings.  Punctuation can either clarify the written message or confuse its meaning.  It pays to know how to use these small but powerful marks. Resist the temptation to punctuate according to guesswork. Although careful use of punctuation enhances the meaning of what you write, idiosyncratic punctuation has the opposite effect.

# Q

## quality

A meaningless cliché when used alone to modify a noun, as in "quality education."  Quality doesn't imply something positive; it needs a modifier to explain the kind of quality. Is it "top quality,"  "low quality" or "mediocre quality"?   Better yet, leave it out and illustrate the quality of what you're describing.

Lady Roadrunner teams have won 12 basketball championships.

Not:

The Lady Roadrunners are a quality basketball team.

## quotation marks

Use double quotation marks before and after direct quotations as well as titles of interviews, personal correspondence, short poems and plays, short musical compositions, speeches, individual television or radio programs, and other unpublished writing.

Chapter II is entitled "Branching Out."
The poem is called "Fog."
"Freedom of the Free Press" was the title of the lecture.

Use single quotation marks for quotations within quotations.

I said, "You must know who shouted, 'Eureka! I've found it!' "

Put a period or comma inside the ending quotation mark.

Doug Clark will speak on "The Nagasaki Project."
Clark's lecture, "Death and Life in American Law," is at 7:30 p.m. in Pioneer Hall.

Put an exclamation point, question mark, or semicolon inside the ending quotation mark only if it's part of the quotation.

"Who's on First?" is one of Abbott and Costello's classic comedy routines.

Put an exclamation point, question mark, or semicolon outside the ending quotation mark if it isn't part of the quotation.

Are you going to hear "The Nagasaki Project"?

Don't use quotation marks after the word so-called.  It is redundant.

The so-called transient [not The so-called "transient"] was a college student.

Use quotation marks around unusual, technical, ironic, or slang words or phrases not accompanied by a word calling attention to them. Use this device sparingly.

The "transient" was a college student.

# R

### re-
Most words with this prefix do not require a hyphen. Use a hyphen if the following word begins with "e" or if eliminating the hyphen would result in confusion.

    re-elect, re-establish, rewrite, redo, recover/re-cover

### reason why
Redundant. Use "reason" alone or omit it entirely.

    The reason [not reason why] you can't register for this class is that it's already full.

or:

    You can't register for this class because it's already full.

### record keeping

### re-establish

### references
Refer to tables, appendices, etc., as follows:

    (See table below.) or (See Table IX.1.)

# S

### SAT
Never spell out or use periods.

### scholarship
See "award."

### screen saver

### seasons
Lowercase, unless part of a formal name:

    summer, spring, Winter Olympics, Corvallis Fall Festival

### secondly or thirdly
Nonstandard, just as "firstly" or "eleventhly" would be. Use "second" or "third."

    First, be accurate. Second, be brief. Third, be prompt.

### self-
This prefix always has a hyphen, even when used as a noun.

### semesters
Lowercase:

    Spring semester, fall semester

### semi-
In general, no hyphen.

    semiannual; seminatural

### senior citizens
Usually reserved for those 65 and older. Avoid using "seniors," due to possible confusion with the student classification.

### serve, service

Both words can be used as verbs, but "serve" applies better to people, and "service" to machines.

>     We try to serve our clients promptly.

but:

>     The technician will service the photocopier tomorrow.

### Service-learning

### sequence

A sequence is two or more courses that must be taken in sequential, usually numerical, order. Don't use "sequence" to mean academic program or core courses.

### since

Refers to intervening time and shouldn't be used in place of "because."

>     It's been several years since I read Madame Bovary.

but:

>     I don't have the assignment because my roommate borrowed my computer.

### skillbuilding

### Social Security Administration

### social security number

### software terms

Software terms (languages, programs, systems, and packages) are set in full capitals if they are acronyms; otherwise, they are spelled according to their trade or market names:

>     C++
>     COBOL
>     Microsoft Word
>     Microsoft FrontPage
>     WordPerfect

### solidus (slash)

Rather than using the solidus, it would be better to clarify the message. Too often, the relationship between the items joined by a solidus is unclear. Does it mean "and," "either" or does it simply link two closely related words? If you can't define what the solidus means, don't use it. If you can define it, use words instead of the solidus so that the reader will understand, too.

>     Chicana or Chicano (not Chicana/Chicano or Chicana/o)
>     faculty or staff member (not faculty/staff)

Use a hyphen instead of a solidus to link two words.

>     the teacher-student ratio (not the teacher/student ratio)

If space limitations make it necessary to use a solidus, explain clearly what it means.

>     Courses numbered 4XX/5XX are for seniors and graduate students, respectively.

Use the solidus with a space on either side to separate two lines of poetry quoted in the text.

>     In Song of the Open Road, Ogden Nash wrote, "I think that I shall never see / A billboard lovely as a tree."

Uses the solidus in pass/no pass only and in P/N only (not P/NP).

### spreadsheet spring

See "seasons."

### spring term

See "terms."

## staff/staffs

Staff is a singular noun and requires a singular verb unless there is more than one staff. Like faculty, it refers to a collective body of people.

>Welcome to our staff.
>The staff has reviewed the president's proposal.
>Some staffs have 30 employees, some only one.
>Use staff member (singular) or staff members (plural) to refer to individuals.
>Do you need one staff member or two this weekend?
>Our staff members are always ready to help you.

## staff member/staff members

## state abbreviations and names

Use the U.S. Postal Service abbreviations (two letters, no periods) when you must abbreviate state names.  In running text, unless the copy is a lengthy list, spell out the state name.

>The Multicultural Club has members from Alaska and Hawaii.
>Club members are from Bethel, Alaska, and Hilo, Hawaii.
>Students receiving scholarships are from Bethel, Alaska; Hilo, Hawaii; and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

## state of Oregon

## state-of-the-art (adj.), state of the art (adv.)

>BMCC's graphic design classes use state-of-the-art computers.
>The computers in the graphic design classes are state of the art.

## statewide

## Student Ambassador Program

## student-athlete

Always hyphenate.

## student government

Use the full name:

>Associated Student Government

## Student Programming Board

## students

Do not capitalize the terms "freshman,"  "sophomore," "junior,"  "senior," or "first-year student."

## sub-

In general, no hyphen follows this prefix.

>subcommittee

## subject codes and names

Subject codes are fixed abbreviations for study areas; they appear in all-capital letters and without internal spaces. An alphabetical list of all subject codes appears in the BMCC catalog.  For example:

>BI (not Biol)
>CH (not CHEM)

## summa cum laude

See "Latin honors."

## summer

See "seasons."

**summer term**
See "terms."

## T

**teacher/student relationships**
**teacher's aide**
**teamwork**
**telephone numbers**
See "telephone and facsimile," under "numbers."

**terms (academic)**
Use "term" as the general reference to each academic session—fall, winter, spring, summer. Do not capitalize the names of these terms.

> Our academic year is divided into four parts: fall term, winter term, spring term, and summer term.
> He completed his classes last term.
> He went to BMCC in the fall of 1985.

**tests, exams**
Use initial caps for the words in the formal name of the text; otherwise, use lower case.

> Computerized Placement Test (CPT),
> the placement test
> placement test score
> Infection Control examination
> CDA examination

not:

> the College Placement Test
> placement examination (say placement test or CPT)

**that, which**
These words are not interchangeable. "That" is a restrictive pronoun; it serves to identify the noun preceding it:

> The road that he took was narrow and rocky.

"Which" is used with nonrestrictive clauses, which add information rather than define or limit what has gone before:

> The back road, which was straight and narrow, was the better choice.

**theater (not theatre)**
Use "theater" in all references.

**Third World country**
Use "developing country" instead.

**'til or 'till**
Nonstandard. Use "until" or "to" or "till."

> Wait until dark.
> President Cam Preus will conduct a seminar from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
> We brainstormed till dawn.

### time

Always include a.m. or p.m. with the time. Use a colon when separating hours from minutes. Avoid using o'clock when referring to time. There are several correct ways of expressing inclusive times. Don't mix and match them.

> The workshop lasted from 8 a.m. to 10:45 p.m.
> Visiting hours are 8–10 a.m.
> The museum is open between noon and 5 p.m.

not:

> The workshop lasted from 8:30 a.m.–10:45 p.m.
> Visiting hours are between 8:30–10:00 a.m.

Use figures except for noon and midnight.

> Use noon instead of 12:00 p.m. Noon is always lowercase unless it's the first word in a sentence.
> Use midnight instead of 12:00 a.m.
> Never write 12 noon or 12 midnight – this is redundant.

### time frame

### titled/entitled

"Titled" refers to the name of something; "entitled" means to have a right to something.

### titles of events

Capitalize, in quotation marks, the full, formal titles of workshops, conferences, seminars, speeches, art exhibitions, and similar events:

> A workshop titled "Technology in the Classroom" will be held on Wednesday.

Do not capitalize articles – a, an, the – or words fewer than four letters unless it is the first or last word in the title.

### titles of people

Also see "academic titles." The general rule is to capitalize a person's title when it is listed before the person's name. When the title comes after the name, the title should be lowercase.

### titles of publications and other works

Titles of books, journals, magazines, newspapers, plays and films, TV and radio series, art exhibits, paintings and other artwork, and titles of operas and other long musical compositions should be Roman type with initial caps.

Capitalize the principal words of a title, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Capitalize an article (the, a, an) or a words of fewer than four letters only if it is treated so by the publication in question; check the masthead to be sure.)

Titles of articles, episodes, short stories, book chapters, poems, conference papers, songs, and essays should be in Roman type and enclosed in quotation marks.

Titles of forms, reports, workshops, conferences, musical works, etc., are also set in Roman text with initial caps.

> The Accreditation Report.
> the BMCC catalog; the general catalog
> the Schedule of Classes, or the class schedule
> Student Rights, Responsibilities
> Student Right to Know Act
> the general budget
> BMCC's General Fund
> the general fund
> the 2005 Graduate Follow-up Report

**to, from**

See "from, to"

**today's global society**

An unnecessary cliché. Omit it.

**totaled, totaling**

**toward**

Not towards. (That's the British spelling)

**trademarks**

Words and names legally trademarked should appear with initial caps to acknowledge that fact. Avoid using Xerox (use photocopier instead). When using a trademarked name is unavoidable, the name should be followed by the symbol ® or TM.

**transferable**

**transferred, transferring**

**U**

**unique**

An overused cliché meaning "one of a kind." If what you are describing is truly unique, omit the cliché and illustrate specifically what makes it that way. Remember, too, that uniqueness isn't necessarily good. If your program's uniqueness is its strongest selling point, you need to show how it is unique and convince the reader that this is a positive attribute.

**United States (n.), U.S. (adj.)**

> We live in the United States.
> We are all U.S. citizens.

**university**

Capitalize only as part of a formal name.

**upcoming**

Up- is unnecessary baggage. Use "coming" or another synonym.

> Ask for a schedule of coming (not upcoming) events.

**upper-division (adj.)**

> upper-division coursework

**utilize**

Jargon. Instead, use the word "use."

> Students use the latest microcomputer software.

Not:

> The latest in microcomputer software is utilized

**V**

**vender (not vendor)**

**versus (spell out)**

**Veterans Services, Veterans Day, Veterans Administration, Veterans Affairs**

No apostrophe.

## viable alternative

A wordy cliché.  Use "alternative" alone.

   Try to suggest some alternative solutions [not viable alternatives].

## vice president

## videocassette

## videotape

## voice mail

Two words, no hyphen.

## W

## wait list, wait-list

No capitals. When used as a noun, two words. When used as an adjective, hyphenate.

   The student was placed on a wait list.
   She is a wait-listed student.

## Web

An abbreviated name for World Wide Web, which is a global system of linking documents, images, sounds and other files across the Internet. Web should be capitalized and should stand apart from site and page:

   Web site, Web page.

Exceptions include: webcast, webmaster.

## Web address

## webcast

## webmaster

## Web page

## Web site

## which, that

See "that, which."

## while

Refers to actions occurring simultaneously.  It may be more precise to use "although" or "but."

   I'll administer CPR while you dial 911.

but:

   I'll administer CPR, although I'm a novice.
   I was a late bloomer, but you've always been a leader.

## -wide

No hyphen precedes this suffix; see collegewide, statewide, nationwide.

## winter

See "Seasons."

## winter term

See "Terms."

## -wise

Avoid using -wise as a suffix.

   She gives fascinating lectures. (not Lecturewise, she's a fascinating teacher.)

## wish or desire

Often misused as verbs. Use "want" or "prefer" for ordinary requests. Save "wish" for things that might not happen and "desire" for needs for emotional fulfillment.

> If you want [not wish] to donate to the Foundation, please make out a check to BMCC.
> I prefer [not desire] to put my contribution on my American Express card.

## woman writer/women writers

## Women's Center

## word division

Word division can be as tricky as spelling. For example, you can divide spell-ing but not spelled, rag-ged but not bagged. Know-ledge divides according to pronunciation, but pro-ject (noun) and pro-ject (verb) divide according to meaning. Consult the dictionary whenever you're in doubt.

## work-

Most words with the prefix "work" do not need a hyphen.

> workday, workforce, workload, workout, workplace, workweek, workload

Exceptions:

> work sheet, work site, work space, work station

## workday

## workforce

## workload

## workout

## workplace

## work sheet

## work site

## work space

## work station

## work-study

Always hyphenate, regardless of usage.

## work-study students

Lowercase; avoid calling them "work studies."

## workweek

## World Wide Web

the World Wide Web (not  World-Wide Web)

## X

## X-ray

Always capitalize.

## Xerox

A trade name. Instead, use "photocopy."

# Y

**year-end (adj.)**
>   the year-end report

**yearlong (adj.)**
>   the yearlong catalog

**year-round (adj.)**
>   year-round support

# Z

**Zip code**

**Zero, zeros**