

Style Guide
UTEP University Communications
Updated September 2019

Note: Some rules vary depending on the audience and goal of the publication. If you have questions, please consult with the Office of University Communications.

References: *AP Stylebook*, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, [UT System Style Guidelines](#)

General Guidelines and Most Commonly Fixed Style Errors

- When resolving a style question, first reference this Style Guide, then the AP Stylebook, then Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. If there is still a doubt, contact University Communications.
- No Oxford commas unless needed for disambiguation.
- No "Dr." unless in a direct quote. Only mention degree if terminal or highest possible in the field.
- Times should be written without excess zeros: 9 a.m. rather than 9:00 a.m. Noon and midnight are preferred to 12 p.m. and 12 a.m.
- Please use the formal name of a building on first reference. The formal names are listed under "buildings."
- The Topical Guide at the end of this document will provide more specifics.

Cultural notes

The Kingdom of Bhutan has enjoyed a special relationship with The University of Texas at El Paso since Kathleen Worrell, the wife of the school's first dean, noticed the similarities between Bhutan and El Paso in the April 1914 issue of National Geographic Magazine. The Lhakhang is a **cultural exhibit** – not a temple – that was first exhibited in Washington, D.C., during the 2008 Folklife Festival. There are ceremonial flags – never prayer flags – outside the Centennial Museum. Bhutanese items on campus also may be referred to as cultural artifacts.

UT System School Names

First Reference	Second/Subsequent References	Abbreviation/Less Formal
The University of Texas at Arlington	UT Arlington	UTA
The University of Texas at Austin	UT Austin	UTAUS – never UTA
The University of Texas at Brownsville	UT Brownsville	UTB; also UTB/TSC
The University of Texas at Dallas	UT Dallas	UTD
The University of Texas at El Paso	UTEP (please do not use UT El Paso)	UTEP
The University of Texas-Pan American	UT Pan American	UTPA
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	UT Rio Grande Valley (also UTRGV)	UTRGV
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin	UT Permian Basin	UTPB
The University of Texas at San Antonio	UT San Antonio	UTSA
The University of Texas at Tyler	UT Tyler	UTT
The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center	UT Southwestern Medical Center	Southwestern or UTSWMC

The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston	UT Medical Branch – Galveston	the Medical Branch or UTMB
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	UT Health Science Center – Houston	UTHSCH, UTHSC-H, or UTHSC-Houston – never UT Houston
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio	UT Health Science Center – San Antonio	UTHSCSA, UTHSC-SA, or UTHSC-San Antonio
The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center (note spaces)	UT MD Anderson Cancer Center	MD Anderson, UTMDA, Cancer Center, or UTMDACC
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler	UT Health Science Center – Tyler	UTHSCT, UTHSC-T, or UTHSC-Tyler
The University of Texas System	UT System	
The University of Texas System Administration	UT System Administration	
The University of Texas System Board of Regents	UT System Board of Regents	

For the UT System guidelines on proper and formal names for different schools and colleges, please refer to: <http://www.utsystem.edu/sites/branding/writing-style-guide>

UT System References

The UT System

When referencing the UT System, use "The University of Texas System" on first reference and "the UT System" on second reference.

It is also correct to refer to "the System" on second reference, as long as the meaning is clear. It is also correct to use the term System Administration when referring to the specific administrative offices of the System in Austin.

When publishing on the Web, do **not** use a space between "U" and "T" because there is no way to control the right margin and they might be split on two lines.

Alphabetical Guide

3D (not 3-D)

A

academic degrees

The abbreviations are: B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), M.A. (Master of Arts), M.S. (Master of Science), Ed.D. (Doctor of Education), Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy), Pharm.D. (Doctor of Pharmacy) and J.D. (Doctor of Law). For these degrees, always use periods and do not space between the period and letters. For degrees with three or more capital letters (MBA, BBA, MSSW, DVM), the periods are omitted. The word degree should not follow a degree abbreviation.

Form the plural with an apostrophe and an s if adding s alone would be confusing, as in abbreviations with periods, lowercase letters used as words, and some uses of capital letters: M.D.'s and Ph.D.'s were awarded.

Doctor of Education	Ed.D.
Doctor of Philosophy	Ph.D.
Doctor of Physical Therapy	DPT
Doctor of Pharmacy	Pharm.D.
Doctor of Business Administration	DBA
Doctor of Musical Arts	DMA
Doctor of Nursing Practice	DNP
Master of Accountancy	M.Acc.
Master of Arts	M.A.
Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies	MAIS
Master of Arts in Teaching English	MATE

Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics	MATM
Master of Arts in Teaching Science	MATS
Master of Business Administration	MBA
Master of Education	M.Ed.
Master of Engineering in Environmental Engineering	M.E. in Environmental Engineering
Master of Fine Arts	MFA
Master of Science in Information Technology	MSIT
Master of Music	M.M.
Master of Occupational Therapy	MOT
Master in Public Administration	MPA
Master of Public Health	MPH
Master of Science	M.S.
Master of Science in Environmental Engineering	M.S. in Environmental Engineering
Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies	MSIS
Master of Science in Nursing	MSN
Master of Science in Social Work	MSW

Academic titles

Capitalize titles only when preceding a name; otherwise, lower case. Before a name, give a person only one title: Do not use phrases such as Dean of Liberal Arts and Professor of English Joe Smart. (A better alternative: Dean of Liberal Arts Joe Smart, who is also a professor of English, said hi.) Do not use German academic style, Dr. Prof. Smart.

Very long titles are more readable when placed after a name: Joe Smart, dean of the College of Business Administration and Graduate School of Business. (See also, [titles](#))

accommodation

acknowledgment

adviser

African-American

afterward (not afterwards)

alma mater

annual: can only be annual after the second consecutive year

Alumni Association

Alumni- this word construction is taken directly from its Latin origins. Therefore, the noun forms are gender specific:

- Alumna - one woman
- Alumnae - a group of women
- Alumnus - one man
- Alumni - a group of men or a group of men and women.

a.m.

among/between (use among for three or more entities; use between for two entities)

associate degree (no possessive)

assure/ensure/insure (see "ensure" listing)

B

backward (not backwards)

bachelor's (but Bachelor of Arts)

between/among (see "among" listing)

biannual, (adj.) twice a year

biennial, every two years

buildings

- Academic Advising Center
- Administration Building
- Benedict Hall
- Biology Building
- Bioscience Research Building
- Brumbelow Building

- Business Administration Building
- Campbell Building
- Centennial Museum
- Center for Inter-American and Border Studies (CIBS)
- Chemistry and Computer Science Building
- Classroom Building
- Computer Science Building
- Cotton Memorial
- Peter and Margaret de Wetter Center
- Don Haskins Center
- Education Building
- El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center (EPNGCC)
- Engineering and Sciences Complex
- Facilities Services
- Foster Stevens Basketball Center
- Fox Fine Arts Center
- Geological Sciences Building
- Graduate Business Center
- Graham Hall
- Health Sciences and Nursing Building
- Helen of Troy Softball Complex
- Heritage House
- Hertzog Building
- Hilton Garden Inn
- Holliday Hall
- Honors House
- Hudspeth Hall
- Kelly Hall
- Kidd Field
- Kidd Memorial Seismic Lab
- Larry K. Durham Sports Center
- Leech Grove
- Lhaxhang
- Magoffin Auditorium
- Memorial Gym
- Memorial Triangle
- Metallurgy Building
- Mike Loya Academic Services Building
- Military Science Building
- Miner Canyon
- Miners Hall
- Miner Heights
- Miner Village
- North Energy Plant
- Old Main
- Parking and Transportation Services
- Peter and Margaret de Wetter Center
- Physical Sciences Building
- Psychology Building
- Quinn Hall
- Ross Moore Building
- Schuster Parking Garage
- Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts

- Student Health and Wellness Center
- Student Recreation Center
- Sun Bowl Parking Garage
- Sun Bowl Stadium
- Undergraduate Learning Center (UGLC)
- Union Building East
 - Tomás Rivera Conference Center (third floor)
- Union Building West
- Union Complex
- University Bookstore
- University Heights Early Learning Academy
- University Field
- University Library
- University Police
- University Ticket Center
- University Towers
- UTEP Dinner Theatre
- Vowell Hall
- Worrell Hall

board (lowercase unless part of title; the board, but the UT System Board of Regents)
bureaucrat

C

campus

cancel, canceled, canceling, cancellation

Chicano Studies program

Chihuahuan Desert Gardens

Circle Drive

Coach (capitalize when preceding a name: Head Football Coach Dana Dimel, Coach Rodney Terry)

colleges:

- the College of Business Administration
- the College of Education
- the College of Engineering
- the College of Health Sciences
- the College of Liberal Arts
- the College of Science
- the School of Nursing
- the School of Pharmacy

plural: colleges of Liberal Arts and Education

State School of Mines and Metallurgy (1914)

College of Mines and Metallurgy (1919)

Texas Western College (1949)

The University of Texas at El Paso (1967)

composition titles: follow AP Style guidelines of capitalizing magazine titles and newspaper names and book and composition titles capitalized in quotes

D

day care (two words)

departments (capitalize only if referring to a specific department by full, proper name):

- the Department of Theatre & Dance (but the theater department)
- Capitalize if referring to a specific department or other academic unit by its full proper name.
Examples: the Department of History, the College of Liberal Arts, the School of Nursing.
Otherwise, lower case: the history department, the college, the nursing school.

Distinguished Alumni Award

- recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award
- Distinguished Alumni Award recipient
- the distinguished alumnus/distinguished alumna (capitalize only when referring to the full, proper name of the award)

doctoral degree

Downtown (capitalize the region, but lowercase when used as an adjective for a city or town: downtown El Paso)

Dr. PH (Doctor of Public Health)

E–F

East Side (the El Paso region); Eastside (adj.)

Ed.D.

email

enroll, enrolled, enrolling

ensure (to guarantee); insure (to provide insurance); assure (to convince)

Extended University – UTEP’s Extended University on second reference (EU is discouraged and should be avoided because of its similarity to the abbreviation for the European Union)

firsthand (adj. and n.)

fiscal year/FY (FY 2014-15, not FY 2014-FY 2015)

freshman, freshmen (pl)

full time, full-time (hyphenate only when used as a modifier e.g., She works full time and is the best full-time employee.)

fundraiser

frequency (radio) KTEP-FM (88.5)

G–H

Glory Road

Glory Field

Gold Nugget Award; Gold Nugget Award recipient; recipient of the Gold Nugget Award

GPA acceptable on all references for *grade-point average*

half-staff (flags are at half-staff rather than half-mast)

Hawthorne Street

health care

home game

I

in/at (see Location entry under Topical Guide)

Inc. (do not set off with commas)

Internet (capitalize)

Insure/ensure/assure (see “ensure” listing)

It’s (it is); its (possessive form)

J–K

Jr. (do not set off with commas)

judgment

L

Legislature (capitalize all references to a particular legislative body)

LLC

Longtime (adj.); long time (adv.)

M–N

master’s (but Master of Arts)

MFA

midnight (not 12 a.m.)

Minerpalooza
monthlong, monthslong
Nobel laureate
Nobel Prize (but Nobel prize-winning author)
nonprofit
nontraditional
noon (not 12 p.m.)

O

on-campus
online

P

Professional and Public Programs (P3 on second reference)
part time, part-time (hyphenate only when used as a modifier)
% (not percent)
Ph.D.
policymaker
premier vs. premiere – premier is first in importance, order or position; premiere is the first performance of a musical or theatrical work or first showing of a movie
President Heather Wilson (not President Dr. Heather Wilson; on second reference, President Wilson. Do not use Ph.D. after her name.)
Principal Investigator (of a research grant)
principal (as a noun is a chief person or thing; as an adjective, it means first in importance)
principle (a noun meaning a fundamental truth, doctrine or law; a guiding rule or code of conduct; a method of operation)

Q-R

Q-and-A format (Q-and-A within a story)
radio frequency KTEP-FM (88.5)
regent (lowercase unless a title before a name)
Randolph Drive
Rim Road

S

semiannual, (adj. and noun) twice a year
showtime
sophomore
spring break, lowercase unless a specific title (Spring Break Camp)
Sun Bowl Drive
System (always capitalize when referring to the UT System)
System-wide

T

teen, teenager, teenage (not teenaged)
The University of Texas System (1st ref.; "The"); the UT System/the System (2nd ref.)
The University of Texas at El Paso (never UT El Paso) (always use "The" and use the full name on first reference unless in a headline or cutline (caption))
theater (but UTEP Dinner Theatre)
through – use in all cases unless talking about a drive-thru.
Time, date, place – When publishing a story, provide the information in the order of time, date, then place.
E.g., The event will take place at 7 p.m. Monday, June 8 in the University Library.
titled (rather than entitled) e.g. The work, titled "The Snow Queen," will start at 7 p.m.
today/tonight – avoid using today or tonight in stories due to the digital publication nature. Instead, use specific dates and times in case someone finds the story or press release months later.

toll-free
toward (not towards)

U-V

United States/U.S. (U.S. is often acceptable for most references)
University (capitalize when talking about UTEP; lowercase for other uses)
University Avenue
UT (no periods, no space)
UTEP (or The University of Texas at El Paso – but never UT El Paso)
The University of Texas System Board of Regents (use complete, unabbreviated name and capitalize “The” on first ref.; “the UT System Board of Regents” or “the Board of Regents” (but board/regents lowercase if used alone))
UT TeleCampus – no space and no periods. Use UTTC for second reference (not “the TeleCampus”)
vice chair
vice president
voluntarism – anything that is done voluntarily, including church attendance or voting
volunteerism – the use or involvement of volunteer labor, especially for community service. Volunteerism is correct in most cases.

W

Web
webcast
webmaster
Web page
website
West Texas (the region)
Wiggins Way
winter break, lowercase and **never** referred to as Christmas break
Women’s Studies program

XYZ

Yandell Drive
yearlong
year-round

Topical Guide

- **Abbreviations**
 - Time expressions and countries' names take periods with no space between the elements (p.m., U.K., U.S.).
 - FY (fiscal year)
- **Academic units** are capitalized when full proper name is used (the School of Nursing) but are lowercase in other references (the school, the nursing school).
- **Acronyms**
 - Job titles and names of most organizations, centers, buildings, forms, tests and other objects are generally spelled without periods (CEO, CIA, SAT, TAAS, etc.).
 - In general, plural acronyms do not need an apostrophe (CEOs).
 - Acronyms should be spelled out on the first reference.
 - Use acronyms sparingly to avoid confusion
- **Capitalization**
 - Official names are capitalized; unofficial, informal, shortened or generic names are not. This rule applies to offices, buildings, schools, departments, programs, centers, etc. (also see Academic Units).
 - No capitalization necessary for informal degree names unless proper nouns are included (bachelor’s of organizational communication, bachelor’s of Chicano studies)

- Capitalize official names of bulletins, forms, conventions, conferences, committees, classes, etc. (Dr. Johnson will teach Advanced Environmental Geology next semester. He will teach advanced geology.)
- **Commas**
 - Use commas sparingly. The Oxford or serial comma is only encouraged when the sentence presents the possibility for confusion or ambiguity without it. Otherwise, if the sentence reads clearly and presents no potential for confusion, the extra comma is strongly discouraged. (Yes: The cat, dog and pig jumped. No: The cat, dog, and pig jumped. Example of Oxford comma used to disambiguate: I bought snacks, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and milk. – However, the editor would suggest rewording the sentence to avoid the need for the Oxford comma: I bought a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, snacks and milk.)
 - In general, no serial comma for a simple series (red, white and blue)
 - *e.g.* and *i.e.* should be followed by a comma (*e.g.*).
 - Use a comma after introductory phrases.
 - Use a comma with a hometown, whether “of” is used or not (*e.g.*, “Mary Richards, of Minneapolis, and Maude Cleghorn, of Milwaukee”).
- **Dashes**
 - Include a space before and after the dash – like this
- **Dates**
 - Abbreviated months are punctuated (Dec.), but are only abbreviated when followed by a date: Dec. 16; Dec. 16, 2015; December 2015.
 - The abbreviations for the months are Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Other months are spelled out.
 - No ordinals with dates (Dec. 3 rather than Dec. 3rd) in a letter or news story
 - Spans are hyphenated, no space (Dec. 3-9; October-December).
- **Degrees**
 - Do not use “Dr.” before someone’s name. Instead, use the abbreviation for the doctoral degree they received after their name. Do not include master’s degrees. (Jane Smith, Ph.D. (or Ed.D., DMA, Pharm.D., M.D., etc.))
 - bachelor’s degree or Bachelor of Arts
 - master’s degree or Master of Science or Master of Arts
 - doctoral degree or Ph.D.
- **Directions**
 - Capitalize well-known regions (West Texas).
- **Ellipsis**
 - Include a space before and after the ellipsis ... like this
- **Ethnicity**
 - As per AP guidelines, hyphenate ethnicities (Mexican-American, African-American) but not nationalities (Latin American, Native American).
- **Faculty Names**
 - Jane Smith, Ph.D. (or Ed.D., DMA, M.D., Pharm.D. or other doctoral degree. Do not use “Dr.” in front of the name. Do not include master’s or bachelor’s degrees with the name.)
- **Hyphens**
 - No hyphens necessary for adverbial phrases ending in -ly (highly qualified applicant)
 - Hyphenate compounds used as adjectives before a noun (a far-reaching decision, a University-related program).
 - Do not use two hyphens together as a dash (--).
- **Initials** are punctuated, with no space between (M.D. Anderson, H.L. Mencken).
- **Majors**
 - Do not capitalize academic majors. Ex: Jane Smith, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, OR UTEP offers a Bachelor of Arts in history. BUT Jose earned a Bachelor of Arts in English.
- **Numbers**

- Use numerals for 10 and above; spell out 1 through 9 (exception: use numerals for numbers accompanying “millions,” “billions” or “percent”).
- Ages are in numerals (3-year-old boy).
- Use hyphens for phone numbers (915-747-5526).
- Ordinals — spell out first through ninth; avoid using superscript (20th century, rather than 20th century).
- **President**
 - UTEP President Heather Wilson (first reference. Do not use Ph.D. after her name.)
 - President Wilson (second reference)
 - the President (always capitalize when referring to the UTEP President)
 - President Emerita Diana Natalicio
- **Publication Titles**
 - Capitalize all magazine and newspaper names and composition titles. Use quotes around composition titles (books, songs, movies, TV programs, lectures, works of art, etc.), rather than italics. Do not use quotes or italics with magazine and newspaper names.
- **Roundabouts**
 - Sun Bowl-University Roundabout
 - Schuster-Spur 1966 Roundabout
 - Sun Bowl-Glory Road Roundabout
- **Sentence spacing** — use a one character space in between ending punctuation and first letter of new sentence.