

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Style Guide

The set of standards for writing documents
for Owens Community College.



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The Owens Community College Office of Marketing and Communications adheres to the style rules, which appear in *The Associated Press Stylebook*, and journalistic style deemed acceptable when writing about the College. The dictionary used to resolve questions related to spelling is the *American Heritage College Dictionary*.

Capitalization



Always capitalize Owens employee titles. *

Ex. Dr. Susie Johnson, Chief Communication Officer

Capitalize the names of organized classes of students and alumni that include a year.

Ex. Class of 2002

Capitalize an academic subject when it is used with a course number.

Ex. Psychology 110, Japanese 111

Capitalize and abbreviate the word Ext. when used with the 1-800-GO-OWENS phone number.

Ex. 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 1234

Capitalize the word College whenever referring to Owens Community College, even though the rest of the name might not precede it.

Ex. The College's Center for the Fine and Performing Arts opened in 2002.

Do not capitalize the word college when referring to other colleges, or colleges and universities in general unless it is part of the proper noun.

Ex. There are six colleges and universities involved with the organization.

Capitalize the first, last and important words in titles of books, art exhibits, plays, lectures and musical compositions.

Ex. "Black Nativity," Introduction to Psychology, Ohio Shakespeare Conference

Capitalize all academic degrees when abbreviated or when referring to the official degree name.

Ex. Ph.D., B.S., Bachelor of Arts

Do not capitalize associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctoral and/or doctorate degree when not used as the official name.

Ex. 1: She earned an associate degree in registered nursing.
Ex. 2: She earned an Associate of Arts at Owens.

Also, listed are appropriate academic degree names to use in the College's marketing and communications literature.

Ex. associate degree, bachelor's degree, baccalaureate degree, master's degree, doctorate degree, doctoral degree

Capitalize all official academic program areas.

Ex. Accounting, Biology, Culinary Arts, Registered Nursing

Capitalize official titles of offices, schools, buildings and clubs.

Ex. Office of Marketing and Communications, Student Health and Activities Center, Administration Hall, Environmental Club, School of Liberal Arts, Office of the Registrar

Do not capitalize offices, buildings and clubs when it is not the proper name.

Ex. enrollment office

* Employee titles are not capitalized in press releases and other media applications per AP guidelines.

Capitalization



Capitalize the names of official organizations, committees and councils.
Ex. President's Council, Student Government, General Education Outcomes Assessment Committee, Owens Leadership Academy

Do not capitalize the name of athletic teams.
Ex. women's volleyball, men's baseball

Capitalize the College's athletic nickname.
Ex. Owens Express, the Express

Capitalize names of official awards and scholarships.
Ex. Faculty Teaching Excellence Award, Board of Trustees Academic Excellence Scholarship

Capitalize proper nouns, months and days of the week.

Do not capitalize a.m. and p.m.
Ex. 9 a.m.

Do not capitalize the words government, federal, state, city, county or township.

Capitalize names of periods and events in history.
Ex. the Civil War, Renaissance art

Capitalize highway, county road, township road, route, state route and chapter only when followed by a number or letter.
Ex. State Route 25, Chapter 19

Capitalize geographical regions of the country. However, do not capitalize northwest preceding Ohio because it is an adjective, not a noun.
Ex. She moved to northwest Ohio from the South.

Capitalize entire geographical names.
Ex. Maumee River, He lived on Oregon Road.

Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore or graduate.
Ex. She led the team in rebounds during her freshman year.

Do not capitalize the seasons unless they are used as designations for an academic semester.
Ex. Fall Semester

Capitalize the names of special campus events.
Ex. Owens Blood Drive, Relay for Life, Rapid Registration

Do not capitalize the word website. Also, website should be one word.

Capitalize the words Internet and Intranet.

Abbreviation



When in doubt, do not abbreviate.

Abbreviate company, incorporated, corporation and limited in company names unless specified differently by the organization.

Ex. Ford Motor Co., Cooper Tire & Rubber Company

Do not abbreviate colleges or universities except on second reference.

Ex. Owens Community College - Owens, Bowling Green State University - BGSU

Do not use % for percent.

Ex. Owens' fall enrollment is 50 percent male students.

Do not abbreviate parts of geographic names except Saint.

Ex. North Canton, Fort Wayne, St. Louis

Abbreviate and capitalize east, west, north, south, northwest and southeast when used with street addresses.

Ex. 274 N. Oregon Rd.

Do not abbreviate United States, United Nations or the United States of America except when used as adjectives.

Ex. U.S. Navy, U.S. Department of State

Abbreviate only January, February, August, September, October, November and December when used with figures. Do not abbreviate otherwise.

Ex. 1: Jan. 3, 1995, was his birthday.

Ex. 2: Jan. 3 was the coldest day of the month.

Ex. 3: The event will occur Jan. 3 - Feb. 16.

Ex. 4: My birthday is in January.

Do not abbreviate on the first reference of a company, organization or firm. Spell out the organizational name. An acronym in parentheses can immediately follow the name of the organization. On second reference the abbreviation should be used. Abbreviations that are acceptable on first reference include NATO, NJCAA and NAFTA, among others.

Ex. Owens is a member of the Ohio Community College Athletic Conference (OCCAC). The OCCAC consists of 12 teams.

Abbreviate St., Ave. and Blvd. only in addresses that include a house number.

Ex. 485 S. Melrose Ave., Central Street

Abbreviate certain states when following a city. Do not abbreviate otherwise. States that are not abbreviated are Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. Postal codes for states should not be used.

Ex. My uncle lives in Muncie, Ind.

Punctuation



COMMAS

Do not use a comma between names with Roman numerals or before Jr. and Sr.
Ex. John Smith Sr., John Smith II

Use commas to set off a name of the state when used following a city.
Ex. 1: Columbus, Ohio, is located on Smith Road.
Ex. 2: He lives in Ann Arbor, Mich., on State Street.

Do not use a comma before the words and or or when connecting the last two elements in a sequence of three or more unless the last element includes and.
Ex. 1: John Brinks, Joe Schmoie and Mike McDonald are all professors.
Ex. 2: He only eats apples, oranges, and macaroni and cheese.

Do not use commas to set off Inc. and Ltd. in corporate names unless specified differently by the organization.
Ex. Apple Computer Inc.

Do not use a comma to separate academic terms and months from a year.
Ex. 1: We registered for Spring Semester 2004.
Ex. 2: I expect to graduate December 2005.

Use a comma to preserve clarity.
Ex. Soon after, he left town.

Use a comma after digits indicating thousands except in serial numbers, street addresses and telephone numbers.
Ex. 1: 4,292
Ex. 2: (419) 777-7777

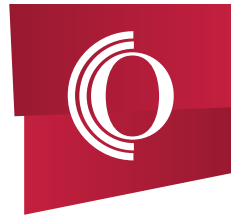
Use a comma to separate the month and year only if the day also is included.
Ex. 1: My birthday is May 16, 1984.
Ex. 2: My birthday is in May 1984.
Ex. 3: March 16, 1984, is her birthday.

Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives from one another if each one modifies the noun alone.
Ex. He is an honest, friendly person.

PERIODS

Most abbreviations using all capital letters do not use periods (Exceptions: U.S., U.S.A.). Most abbreviations using lower case letters do. Refer to the dictionary.
Ex. NJCAA, SHAC, GPA, a.m., p.m., Ph.D.

Punctuation



APOSTROPHES

Do not use an apostrophe for certain official names.

Ex. Presidents Day, JVs, Veterans Day

Use an apostrophe to show the plurals of single numbers and letters, but not multiple letters or numbers.

Ex. 1: He earned two A's and a B.

Ex. 2: The program began in the early 1960s.

Use an apostrophe in groupings of degrees.

Ex. He earned two master's degrees and three bachelor's degrees.

Use an apostrophe to show personal possession, but not when using a personal pronoun.

Ex. the College's Bookstore, his, theirs, ours, its (It's means it is.)

Use an apostrophe to show a contraction or omission of letters or numbers.

Ex. Class of '01

COLONS

Use a colon between two independent clauses when the second explains or amplifies the first.

Ex. Music is more than something mechanical: it is an expression of deep feeling and ethical values.

SEMICOLONS

Use a semicolon when coordinating conjunctions when and, but or for is not present.

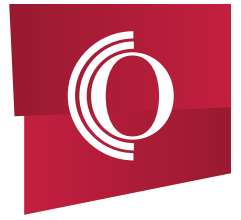
Ex. The package was due last week; it arrived today.

Use semicolons to separate elements of a series when the individual segments contain material that must also be set off by commas.

Ex. 1: He leaves a son, John Anderson of Chicago; three daughters, Jane Smith of New York, Mary Smith of San Diego and Jean, wife of William Bragsby of Boston; and a sister, Martha, wife of Robert Warren of Warren, Ohio.

Ex. 2: John Smith of Oregon, forward (Clay High School); Jacob Thomas of Tecumseh, Mich., center (Bedford High School), and Sue Adams of Toledo, guard (Bowsher High School).

Punctuation



PARENTHESES

Use parentheses to enclose information, which is added to a sentence, but is not considered of major importance. Always be sure that any material enclosed in parentheses can be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence.

Ex. Jim Smith (formerly a resident of Tiffin) is an Owens graduate.

Use parenthesis to enclose the area code of a phone number.

Ex. (567) 661-8888

Use parentheses where location identification is needed but is not part of the official name.

Ex. The Columbus (Ohio) Department of Public Education

QUOTATION MARKS

Place the period or comma always within the quotation marks, or outside parentheses.

Ex. "Jim works in the School of Arts and Sciences," he said. "He is a professor."

When quoting consecutive paragraphs, repeat quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph and close quotes only at the end of the last paragraph.

Ex. 1: "He attended Owens Community College before transferring to Bowling Green State University.

Ex. 2: "However, he decided to travel for a year before beginning his bachelor's degree."

Use quotations around nicknames and slang expressions.

Ex. Ronald "Smokey" Stevens

Use double quotation marks for quoted material and single quotation marks for a quote within a quote.

Ex. "The 'CBS Evening News' is over," he said.

Use quotation marks to enclose titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, plays, poems, songs, works of art, and radio and television programs when the full title is used. Use no quotation marks for the titles of sacred books.

Ex. "CBS Evening News", "Gone With the Wind", the Bible

Use single quotation marks for headlines.

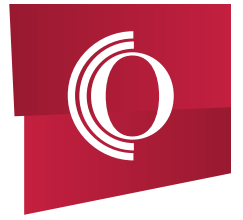
Ex. Owens Hosts 'Gone With the Wind' Author

Place the dash, the question mark, a period and the exclamation point within the quotation marks when they apply only to the quoted information. Place them outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

Ex. 1: Smith asked, "What did you say?"

Ex. 2: Did you read "Sports Illustrated"?

Punctuation



DASHES

The dash indicates a sudden change in thought. In addition, it can add emphasis to the words set off by a dash. It is typed as two hyphens without a space before or after.

Ex. That was the end of the project—unless the company could come up with additional money.

HYPHENS

Hyphenate ages.

Ex. 5- and 6-year-olds

An adjective cannot modify another adjective. Therefore, hyphenate two adjectives used together if the first one modifies the second one.

Ex. First-class investment, five-story building

Do not use a hyphen with words that end in ly.

Ex. fully, newly

Do not use hyphens between numbers in an address.

Ex. 3249 137th St.

Use a hyphen in prefixes ending in vowels, and followed by the same vowel.

Ex. re-entry, Co-op program

Exceptions: cooperate, coordinate

Use a hyphen in odds and scores.

Ex. 3-2, 10-1

Use a hyphen for page and time references. There is no space on either side of the hyphen when referring to two times in either p.m. or a.m. There is space when referring to two times in p.m. and a.m. Always use noon when referring to 12 p.m.

Ex. 1: Pages 2-14 in the volume.

Ex. 2: Saturday hours are 1-9 p.m.

Ex. 3: Sunday hours are 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Ex. 4: Monday hours are noon – 6 p.m.

Hyphenate the prefixes all, ex and self.

Ex. All-American, ex-convict, self-employed

Use a hyphen in dates extending over two years. Also, only reference the last two years when using a hyphen in dates extending over two years. The only exception is when referencing years within two centuries.

Ex. 1990-94, 1999-2000

Use a hyphen to separate a prefix from a proper noun.

Ex. un-American, anti-Iraq.

Numbers



Do not use rd, st, th or nd for days of the month.
Ex. April 2, not April 2nd

Spell out cents for amounts that are less than \$1.
Ex. 25 cents

Spell out numbers that are less than two digits.
Ex. Four, 54, six, 890

Certain figures are used exclusively as numbers, such as records, election returns, times, speeds, latitude and longitude, money, temperatures, highways, distances, dimensions, heights, ages, ratios, proportions, military units, political divisions, orchestra instruments, court districts, betting odds, amounts of academic credit and dates.
Ex. 105 MPH, \$10

Do not begin a sentence with numerals. Use a word or spell out the figures.
Ex. Thirty-four students signed up for classes.

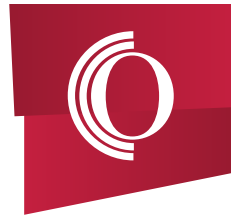
Use commas in a number with more than three figures. The exceptions are telephone numbers, zip codes, serial numbers and house numbers.
Ex. 1: 4,060
Ex. 2: 4001 Buckeye St.

Spell out centuries below 10th. Use figures (with th) for 10th and above.
Ex. 20th century; ninth century

Avoid unnecessary numerals when possible.
Ex. 7 p.m. not 7:00 p.m.

Use figures for decades.
Ex. 1960s, the '50s

Spelling



COMMONLY MISPELLED WORDS

Adviser

Backward (no s)

Cannot

Catalog

Counselor

Citywide

Coursework

Disc

Forward (no s)

Goodbye

Health care

Nationwide

Potato or Potatoes

Tomato or Tomatoes

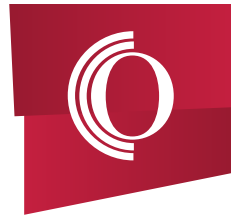
Toward (no s)

Theatre is the proper spelling when in reference to Owens Community College.

Mainstage Theatre is the name of the theatre within the Center for Fine and Performing Arts.

Studio Theatre is the name of Room 111 in the Center for Fine and Performing Arts.

Names



When referring to a student's hometown use Jim Smith of Toledo not Jim Smith, Toledo.

Use a person's preferred name. If unaware of the preferred name, ask. Always give first and last names of persons the first time the name appears.

Graduates of the College should be identified.

Ex. Bob Hartman, a 1994 graduate

Identify an Owens employee by title and department.

Ex. John Smith, Owens professor of accounting

Identify students by name, hometown, class and major.

Ex. Terence Walker of Toledo, a sophomore business major

When stating a company name always confirm that it is the proper name for the company.

Ex. Sauder Manufacturing Co.

An event cannot be called annual until it has been held for at least two successive years.

Ex. inaugural Golf Classic, second annual Golf Classic

Usage



Locations should be referred to as:

Toledo-area Campus
Findlay-area Campus
Learning Center Downtown Toledo
Learning Center Maumee

Off-site location: Owens Community College Learning Center Millstream

Avoid sexist nouns and pronouns when possible. Use the plural “students” to avoid the he/she problem.

Ex.

Wrong: *A student should use his or her ID card for the Student Health and Activities Center.*

Right: *Students should use their Owens Express ID for the Student Health and Activities Center.*

At Owens the leader of a department or the Board of Trustees is called a “chair”. Other colleges and universities may call them chairpersons or chairmen. When referring to other colleges, follow their appropriate style.

Always spell out Owens Community College on first reference. In headlines, use Owens not OCC. Always spell out the names of buildings.

Ex. College Hall

Write noon or midnight, or 12 p.m. or 12 a.m. Not 12 noon or 12 midnight.

Ex. 1: The festival will start at noon.

Ex. 2: The festival will start at 12 p.m.

Use men and women when referring to College students, not boys and girls.

Ex. men’s basketball, women’s volleyball

For alumni: Male college graduates are alumni. Women college graduates are alumnae. Singular of the masculine is alumnus. Singular of the feminine is alumna. Use alumni for the plural in general. Do not use the shortened “alums”.

Use singular pronouns for organizations.

Ex. The Environmental Club met last night. It meets again today.

When referring to honorary groups, never use honorary as a noun, only as an adjective, these groups are appropriately called honor societies.

Usage



Preferred word usage also includes:

Also will be	Not: Will also be
Gymnasium	Not: Gym
Different from	Not: Different than
Adviser	Not: Advisor
Forward and backward	Not: Forwards and backwards
Its (possessive)	Not: It's
Its meeting (group)	Not: Their meeting
10 persons	Not: 10 people
Unique	Not: Very Unique
Died unexpectedly	Not: Died suddenly
Lend (verb)	Not: Loan
Canceled	Not: Cancelled
Traveled	Not: Travelled

When referring to time and location of an event, the proper order is time, day, date and place.

Ex. The concert will be held at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 17 at the Student Health and Activities Center.

Do not use "or not" with whether.

Ex. We did not know whether class was canceled.

When referring to Canadian cities, use city and province. Do not refer to Canada.

Ex. 1: Toronto, Ontario

Ex. 2: Montreal, Quebec

Other foreign cities traditionally require the designation of country.

Ex. 1: Toledo, Spain

Ex. 2: Paris, France

Common usage mistakes:

It's is the contraction for "it is". Its is the possessive personal pronoun.

Compliment - to praise. Complement - to complete.

Use the singular "freshman" when it is used as an adjective.

Ex. He is a freshman student.

Use figures for all temperatures except zero. Also, use a word, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero.

Ex. The temperature was minus 10 degrees F.

Words that are often interchanged mistakenly:

comprise (include)	vs	compose (made up of)
further (additionally)	vs	farther (physical distance)