

# ***Get the “Write” Style:***

*Common Editing Concerns at SLCC*



**WAC@SLCC**  
Writing Across the College

The SLCC Style Guide provides common editing guidelines based upon the Associated Press (AP) style guide. This guide is for use in workplace and public writing, not academic writing. Academic disciplines have their own style guides (e.g. MLA, APA, and IEEE) that should be followed by students and faculty when writing academic documents.

The pages that follow provide most common editing concerns in their AP format, along with the SLCC Style Guide exceptions.

The **SLCC Custom Stylebook** and the entire **Online AP Style Guide** are available to SLCC employees and students while on campus or through All Access. This access has been generously provided by the SLCC Library.

**Through SLCC Library:**

1. Go to "libweb.slcc.edu"
2. Scroll to "Collections"
3. Select "Research Databases"
4. Scroll to "AP Stylebook Online" and Select

**Through WAC website:**

1. Go to slcc.edu/wac
2. Click on "Staff"
3. Click on "SLCC Style Guide"
4. Click on "SLCC Custom Stylebook" or "Online AP Style Guide"

Contact the SLCC Writing Across the College program with any questions/concerns at [wac@slcc.edu](mailto:wac@slcc.edu) or (801) 957-3232.

This is considered a living document and will be updated as changes are made.  
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Spelling Conventions (General)		
	AP	SLCC
<b>Spelling</b>	Uses <i>Webster's New World College Dictionary</i>	Follows AP.
<b>Capitalization</b>	Capitalizes proper nouns and names.	Follows AP.
<b>Abbreviations/ Acronyms</b>	Do not initially use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not immediately recognize. Follow with acronym in parentheses.  Spell out "versus" except in short expressions, "vs."	Follows AP.
<b>"e"</b>	No hyphen for "email." Use hyphen for other e- terms: <i>e-book, e-portfolio, e-learning.</i>	Follows AP, except for <i>ePortfolio</i> and <i>eLearning</i> .

Spelling Conventions (College Topics)		
	AP	SLCC
<b>Salt Lake Community College</b>	Capitalize the full name: <i>Salt Lake Community College</i>	Follows AP, but clarifies:  Lowercase "college" unless part of the formal title, Salt Lake Community College: The <i>college</i> policy calls for students to pay their tuition in full.  Salt Lake Community College and SLCC are acceptable in all references online, in internal publications, and in <i>SLCC Magazine</i> .  In external communications, the full name of the College should always be used on first reference and SLCC is acceptable for subsequent references.
<b>Campus and campus name</b>	Not indicated.	Uppercase when part of the formal name of a specific campus: <i>Taylorville Redwood Campus</i> .  Lowercase when not part of a formal name: The <i>campus</i> spans 80 acres.  Lowercase when plural: South City, Jordan, and Larry H. Miller <i>campuses</i> .

<b>Departments/ Offices</b>	Lowercase when they are generally used terms: the <i>history department</i> of SLCC.	<p>Capitalize the first letter of each word in SLCC departments, divisions and offices.</p> <p>Avoid using “department,” “division” or “office” unless part of the official name.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• Budget Office</li> <li>• Department of Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</li> <li>• Development Office</li> <li>• Division of Allied Health</li> <li>• Health and Lifetime Activities</li> <li>• Institutional Effectiveness</li> </ul>
<b>Courses/ subjects</b>	<p>Capitalize specific course titles: <i>Introduction to Anthropology</i>.</p> <p>Do not capitalize subjects in general usage, except those designating language: He studied <i>history, English and business management</i>.</p>	Follows AP.
<b>Academic and professional titles</b>	<p>Capitalize formal titles such as president, provost, dean, etc., when they precede a name: SLCC <i>Provost Clifton Sanders</i> was awarded an honorary doctorate.</p> <p>Lowercase when they follow a name, and elsewhere: Clifton Sanders, <i>provost at SLCC</i>, was awarded an honorary doctorate. The <i>college president</i> visited the Board of Regents.</p>	Follows AP.
<b>Academic degrees</b>	<p>Degree Names: associate degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, Associate of Science, Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Art, Master of Arts</p> <p>Abbreviations: A.A., A.S., B.A., M.A., Ph.D.</p> <p>Do not use both the title Dr. before and then Ph.D. after an individual’s name</p>	<p>Follows AP, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• associate’s degree (includes ‘s)</li> <li>• Abbreviations: AA, AS, BA, MA, PhD (no periods)</li> </ul>
<b>semester</b>	Not indicated.	Use “semester,” not “term.” Capitalize “semester” when referring to a specific semester: <i>Spring Semester 2016</i> .

Punctuation		
	AP	SLCC
<b>ampersand (&amp;)</b>	Do not use in place of “and,” except when a part of a formal name or title.	Follows AP.
<b>Apostrophes</b>	Used to indicate possession, <i>Sara’s</i> book; contractions, <i>they’re</i> ; and omitted figures, the ‘60s.  Not used with possessive pronouns or to create plural noun.  Singular proper noun ending in “s” followed by only apostrophe: Mr. <i>Glass’</i> glasses.	Follows AP.
<b>Colon</b>	Typically introduces a list.  Only one space after a colon.	Follows AP.
<b>Comma</b>	Does not use “Oxford comma.” No comma before a conjunction at the end of a series: She took <i>English, math and science classes</i> .  Use comma if needed for a series of complex phrases/clauses.	Follows AP unless the lack of the comma makes the series ambiguous or unclear.
<b>Dash</b>	Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause: <i>Through her long reign, the queen and her family have adapted – usually skillfully – to the changing taste of the time.</i>  Avoid overuse of dashes to set off phrases when commas would suffice.	Follows AP.
<b>Ellipsis</b>	In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces: ( ... ) Not ( . . . )	Follows AP.
<b>Hyphens</b>	Compound modifiers typically include hyphens: <i>two-day weekend</i> .  Except, no hyphens after “very” ( <i>very big dog</i> ) or adverbs ending in “ly”: <i>easily accessed</i> .	Follows AP.
<b>Parentheses</b>	Parentheses are jarring to the reader; using them is a clue that the sentence is contorted. Try to rewrite sentence.  Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (such as this fragment).  (An independent parenthetical sentence such as this one takes a period before the closing parenthesis.)	Follows AP.

<b>Period</b>	Only one space after a period.	Follows AP.
<b>Prefixes and hyphens</b>	Generally, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant.  Hyphenate if the prefix ends in a vowel and the base word begins in the same vowel, <i>re-enter</i> , (except for cooperate and coordinate).  Use hyphen if base word is capitalized.	Follows AP.
<b>Semicolon</b>	Indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey but less than the separation a period implies.  Separate elements of a series when the items are long or when individual elements contain material that also must be set off by commas: <i>The College has students from Salt Lake City, Utah; Boise, Idaho; and Las Vegas, Nevada.</i>	Follows AP.

Titles		
	AP	SLCC
<b>titles</b>	Always capitalize the first letter of the first word.  Capitalize the first letter of each principal word in the title, including prepositions and conjunctions, but not if the words are less than four letters.  For example, do not capitalize the, a, an, to and other words that are less than four letters.	Follows AP, and adds:  Keep webpage titles short, using as few words as possible.
<b>Composition titles</b>	Use quotation marks to surround the following types of media titles: books, poems, lectures, speeches, works of art, computer games, movies, operas, plays, albums, songs, radio and television programs.  Do not put quotes around Bible and reference books, catalogs, almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.	Follows AP, except italicizes compositions that contain other compositions (e.g. books are italicized, chapters in quotation marks; periodicals are italicized, articles in quotation marks; websites are italicized, webpages in quotation marks).

Numbers		
	AP	SLCC
<b>cardinal numbers</b>	In general, spell out one through nine.  Use figures for 10 or above.  Use figures whenever preceding a unit of measure or referring to ages of people, animals, events, or things.	Follows AP, except:  Use a hyphen to state a range of numbers.  Avoid starting a sentence with a figure.

	Use figures in tabular matter.	
<b>Ordinal numbers</b>	Spell out <i>first</i> through <i>ninth</i> . Use figures for 10 and above: <i>10<sup>th</sup></i> , <i>21<sup>st</sup></i> , <i>43<sup>rd</sup></i> .	Follows AP, except: Always use figures for streets: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.</i> , <i>7<sup>th</sup> St.</i>
<b>fractions</b>	Spell out amounts less than one and use hyphens between the words: <i>three-fifths</i> , <i>one-third</i> , <i>one-eighth</i> . Use figures for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals when possible.	Follows AP, except: Do not use hyphens when describing general amounts: <i>One half of students earn less than \$100,000 a year.</i>
<b>Percentages</b>	Always use figures and spell out the word percent: <i>35 percent</i> .	Follows AP.
<b>Telephone numbers</b>	List the entire number without parentheses: <i>801-957-4111</i> . If extension numbers are needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension: <i>212-621-1500, ext. 2</i> .	Follows AP.
<b>money</b>	Spell out the word <i>cents</i> (lowercase), using numerals for amounts less than a dollar: <i>5 cents</i> , <i>12 cents</i> . Use the \$ sign and decimal system for larger amounts: <i>\$1.01</i> , <i>\$2.50</i>	Follows AP.
<b>Student Number</b>	Not indicated.	Use "Student Number" (always uppercase) "S Number" is acceptable on later references Never use "SID", or "Student Identification Number"
<b>street and mailing addresses</b>	Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: <i>1600 Pennsylvania Ave</i> . Never abbreviate "Road." Spell out and capitalize "Avenue, Boulevard, and Street" when part of a formal street name without a number: <i>Pennsylvania Avenue</i> . Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names; use figures for 10 <sup>th</sup> and above: <i>7 Fifth Ave.</i> , <i>100 21<sup>st</sup> St</i> . Use periods in the abbreviation P.O. for P.O. Box numbers.	Follows AP, except: Always use figures for numbered streets: <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.</i> , <i>7<sup>th</sup> St</i> .

Dates and Time		
	AP	SLCC
<b>dates</b>	Use figures: <i>Jan. 1</i> , <i>March 14</i> . Never use st, nd, rd, or th.	Follows AP.

<b>days of the week</b>	Do not abbreviate unless needed in tabular format, and then as follows, without periods: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat.	Follows AP.
<b>months</b>	Abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.  Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The last day of classes is Dec. 12.</i></li> <li>• <i>The event is in December.</i></li> <li>• <i>The event is in December 2015.</i></li> </ul>	Follows AP.
<b>year</b>	Use an “s” without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: <i>the 1890s, the 1800s.</i>  Years are the only exception to the general rule that a figure is not used to start a sentence: <i>1976 was a very good year.</i>	Follows AP, but adds: It is unnecessary to include the current year with dates for events or announcements. However, if more than one year is mentioned, use the years for clarification.  Use semester and the year when referring to a specific semester, such as <i>Spring Semester 2016.</i>
<b>time of day</b>	Use figures except for “noon” and “midnight,” 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 9-11 a.m., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Follows AP.

Miscellany		
	AP	SLCC
<b>contacts</b>	Not indicated.	When listing a contact, use the phone number and email address. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For more information, contact 801-957-4000 or <a href="mailto:howard.gunderson@slcc.edu">howard.gunderson@slcc.edu</a>.</li> <li>• Howard Gunderson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 801-957-4000</li> <li>○ <a href="mailto:howard.gunderson@slcc.edu">howard.gunderson@slcc.edu</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Hyperlinks</b>	Include full website in story/text.  Hyperlinks are used when writing webpages or interactive digital documents.	When directing users to another webpage, avoid listing webpage addresses, such as <a href="http://slcc.edu/students-future">slcc.edu/students-future</a> .  Instead, create hypertext. Try to place your hypertext at the end of a sentence or paragraph. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out the <a href="#">Top 10 Reasons to Choose SLCC</a>.</li> <li>• SLCC offers a host of <a href="#">financial aid products</a>.</li> </ul>