Get the "Write" Style:

Common Editing Concerns at SLCC

The SLCC Style Guide provides common editing guidelines based on the Associated Press (AP) style guide. This guide is for use in workplace, 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 following pages provide the 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:	Through WAC website:
1. Go to "libweb.slcc.edu" 2. Scroll to "Collections" 3. Select "Research Databases" 4. Scroll to "AP Stylebook Online" and Select	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 or (801) 957-3232.

 This is considered a living document and will be updated as changes are made.
(*Ver. 2022-11-22*)

Table of Contents

Language Use

As a community college that serves a diverse student population, it is essential to follow best practices for inclusivity in our communication. SLCC's Style Guide bases its language guidelines on the Associate Press Stylebook -- with the exceptions noted below -- which emphasizes precision and awareness of how words shape perception.

	AP	SLCC
Person First or Identity First	Try to determine the preference of the subject. • Person first: *people with disabilities, student with autism* • Identity first: disabled people, *autistic student.* If not able to do so, use a mix of person first and identity first language. Do not use "the" to describe a group of marginalized people with shared characteristics: *the poor, the disabled.*	Follows AP, though the Deaf community uses identity first.
Pronouns	Use "they/them/their" to accurately represent a person who uses these pronouns. When using "they/them" as a singular pronoun, explain if it isn't clear in context to avoid implying more than one person: *"Morales, who uses the pronoun they, said they will retire in June."*	Follows AP, except, There is no need to explain the singular *they*: *"Morales said they will retire in June."*
Gender Neutral	Do not presume maleness by using "he/his/him/él," "-man." Use "they" or reword to remove gendered language: *The school gave tuition refunds to any student who raised their grades.* *The student chair called for the police officer to respond.*	Follows AP.
Race/Ethnicity	May use "people of color" or "minority/minority groups" when necessary, in broad references to multiple races other than white. Be specific when possible (e.g., *Black Americans, members of the Navajo or Diné Nation*).	Follows AP, except, May use "BIPOC" (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) Instead of "minority/minority groups," use the terms "structurally marginalized" and "institutionally marginalized." "Minority" has been

	Do not use "minority" or a racial grouping term as a noun. Use only as an adjective describing a noun (e.g., *minority students, Asian American faculty*). "Native American" and "American Indian" are acceptable in general references. For specific references, use the preferred description (e.g., tribal affiliation). "Latino/Latina/Latinx" and "Hispanic" are terms used to describe persons or persons with ancestors from a Spanish-speaking land or culture, or Latin America. Attempt to determine the preference of whom you are writing about or for. Do not use terms "Orient" or "Oriental." The acceptable term is "Asian."	erroneously used as a synonym for people of color. From a numerical perspective, people of color are the global majority. Also, "minority" signals that people of color emerge into the world as marginal, which is simply inaccurate. "Chicana/o/x" is used by some people whose ancestors lived in the U.S. before it was purchased and colonized.
Ability	Use "disabled," not "handicapped." Do not use euphemisms like "handi-capable," "differently abled," "physically challenged."	Follows AP, and do not use words like "special" or "special needs."
Migration	Use "immigrant" or "migrant" only unless immigration status is necessary to include. Use "illegal" only to refer to an action, not a person. Use "immigrants lacking permanent legal status." Do not use "alien" or "noncitizen" or "undocumented." Use specific terms whenever possible: *Dreamers, refugees, asylum-seekers, green card holders, DACA, visa type.*	Follow AP, except, May also use "undocumented immigrant."

Spelling Conventions (General)		
	AP	SLCC
Spelling	Uses *Webster's New World College Dictionary*	Follows AP.
Capitalization	Capitalizes proper nouns and names.	Follows AP, except example should be "the deaf student" because the Deaf

		community follows identity first practices
	When referring to race/ethnicity, capitalize the adjective: *"Black students"* *"Latino/Latina/Latinx faculty,"* *"Hispanic staff members,"* etc. Do not capitalize "white": *white administrators*. Capitalize the adjective "Indigenous," which describes people who are original inhabitants of a place. Capitalize "Deaf" when referring to the culture and community. Lowercase "deaf" when describing the audiological condition of total or major hearing loss. Lowercase "deaf" when referring to an individual, *"The student, who is deaf, ..."* Capitalize LGBTQ, LGBTQIA, LGBTQ+.	
Abbreviations/ Acronyms	Do not initially use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not immediately recognize. Follow with acronym in parentheses. Do not include quotation marks: *Salt Lake Community College (SLCC),* not *Salt Lake Community College ("SLCC")*. Spell out "versus" except in short expressions, "vs."	Follows AP.
"e"	No hyphen for "email." Use hyphen for other e- terms: *e-book, e-portfolio, e-learning*.	Follows AP, except for "ePortfolio" and "eLearning."

Spelling Conventions (College Topics)		
	AP	SLCC
Salt Lake Community College	Capitalize the full name: *Salt Lake Community College*	Follows AP, but clarifies: Lowercase when describing a noun: *The college policy calls for students to pay their tuition in full.* Capitalize when used as a proper noun: *Representatives of the College attended the event.* Salt Lake Community College and SLCC are acceptable in all references online, in internal publications, and in *SLCC Magazine*.

		In external communications, the full name of the College should always be used on first reference and "SLCC" is acceptable for subsequent references.
Campus and campus name	Not indicated.	Uppercase when part of the formal name of a specific campus: *Taylorsville Redwood Campus*. Lowercase when not part of a formal name: The *campus* spans 80 acres. Lowercase when plural: South City, Jordan, and Larry H. Miller *campuses*.
Departments/ Offices	Lowercase when they are generally used terms: the *history department* of SLCC.	Capitalize the first letter of each word in SLCC departments, divisions, and offices. Avoid using "department," "division" or "office" unless part of the official name. • *Academic Advising* • *Budget Office* • *Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences* • *Development Office* • *Division of Allied Health* • *Health and Lifetime Activities* • *Institutional Effectiveness*
Courses/ subjects	Capitalize specific course titles: *Introduction to Anthropology*. Do not capitalize subjects in general usage, except those designating language: He studied *history, English, business management, and Japanese*.	Follows AP.
Academic and professional titles	Capitalize formal titles such as president, provost, dean, etc., when they precede a name: SLCC *Provost Clifton Sanders* was awarded an honorary doctorate. Lowercase when they follow a name, and elsewhere: Clifton Sanders, *provost at SLCC*, was awarded an honorary doctorate. The *college president* visited the Board of Regents.	Follows AP.
Academic degrees	Degree Names: associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, Associate of Science, Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Art, Master of Arts Abbreviations: A.A.S., A.A., A.S., B.A., M.A., Ph.D.	Follows AP, except, • applied associate's degree, associate's degree (includes 's), • abbreviations: AAS, AA, AS, BA, MA, PhD (no periods)

	Do not use both the title Dr. before and then Ph.D. after an individual's name	
Semester	Not indicated.	Use "semester," not "term." Capitalize "semester" when referring to a specific semester: *Spring Semester 2021.*

Punctuation		
	AP	SLCC
Ampersand (&)	Do not use in place of "and," except when a part of a formal name or title.	Follows AP.
Apostrophes	Used to indicate possession, *Sara's* book; contractions, *they're*; 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. *Glass'* glasses.	Follows AP.
Colon	Typically introduces a list. May precede a clarifying definition. Only one space after a colon.	Follows AP.
Comma in series	Use a comma to separate elements in a series, but do not use a comma before the conjunction in most simple series: She took *English, math and science classes.* Use comma before conjunction if needed for clarity or precision.	Follows AP in general but may use "Oxford comma" if desired. Whether using it or not, consistency is necessary.
Dash	Use EM dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause *Through her long reign, the queen and her family have adapted – usually skillfully – to the changing taste of the time.* EM dash: [space] + 2 hyphens + [space] + [return] Avoid overuse of dashes to set off phrases when commas would suffice.	Follows AP.
Ellipsis	In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces: (…) Not (. . .): *the course was offered to students … upon the start of the semester.*	Follows AP.

Hyphens	Compound modifiers typically include hyphens: *two-day weekend.* Except, no hyphens after "very" (*very big dog*) or adverbs ending in "ly": *easily accessed.* Do not use hyphens between dual heritage terms: *African American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Arab American.*	Follows AP, except, Try to determine the preference of the subject.
Parentheses	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.
Period	Only one space after a period.	Follows AP.
Prefixes and hyphens	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, *re-enter*, (except for cooperate and coordinate). Use hyphen if base word is capitalized.	Follows AP.
Semicolon	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: *The College has students from Salt Lake City, Utah; Boise, Idaho; and Las Vegas, Nevada.*	Follows AP.

Titles		
	AP	SLCC
Titles	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.	Follows AP, and adds: Keep webpage titles short, using as few words as possible.

	For example, do not capitalize the, a, an, to and other words that are less than four letters. Proper nouns and pronouns are always capitalized in titles: *The King and I.*	
Composition titles	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: • *Book*: Italicized • "Chapter": Quotation marks • *Periodical*: Italicized • "Article": Quotation marks • *Website*: Italicized • "Webpage": Quotation marks The source is italicized; the sub-source is in quotations.

Numbers		
	AP	SLCC
Cardinal numbers	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. Use figures in tabular matter.	Follows AP, except: Use a hyphen to state a range of numbers. Avoid starting a sentence with a figure.
Ordinal numbers	Spell out *first* through *ninth*. Use figures for 10 and above: *10th, 21st, 43rd*.	Follows AP, except: Limit the use of superscript which limits screen readers.
Fractions	Spell out amounts less than one and use hyphens between the words*: three-fifths, one-third, one-eighth*. Use figures for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals when possible. When using fractional characters, use a forward-slash mark (/): *1/8, 1/4, 5/16, 9/10*, etc. For mixed numbers, use *1 1/2, 2 5/8*, etc.	Follows AP, except: Do not use hyphens when describing generalized estimates: *One half of students earn less than $100,000 a year*.
Percentages	Always use figures with % symbol. Reword sentence to not start with percentage.	Follows AP.
Telephone numbers	List the entire number without parentheses: *801-957-4111*. If extension numbers are needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension: *212-621-1500, ext. 2*.	Follows AP.

Money	Spell out the word *cents* (lowercase), using numerals for amounts less than a dollar: *5 cents, 12 cents.* Use the $ sign and decimal system for larger amounts: *$1.01, $2.50*	Follows AP.
Student Number	Not indicated.	Use "Student Number" (always capitalized). "S Number" is acceptable on later references. Never use "SID", or "Student Identification Number."
Street and mailing addresses	Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., and St. only with a numbered address: *1600 Pennsylvania Ave.* Never abbreviate "Road." Spell out and capitalize "Avenue, Boulevard, and Street" when part of a formal street name without a number: *Pennsylvania Avenue.* Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names; use figures for 10th and above: *7 Fifth Ave., 100 21st St.* Use periods in the abbreviation P.O. for P.O. Box numbers.	Follows AP, except: Follow conventions of the geographic area when writing addresses: *171 10th Avenue, Salt Lake City; 1410 S. 1500 East, Salt Lake City.*

Dates **and** Time		
	AP	SLCC
Dates	Use figures*: Jan. 1, March 14*. Never use st, nd, rd, or th.	Follows AP.
Days of the week	Do not abbreviate unless needed in tabular format, and then as follows, without periods: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat.	Follows AP.
Months	Abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. • *The last day of classes is Dec. 12.* • *The last day of classes is May 5.* Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone: • *The event is in December.* • *The event is in December 2015.*	Follows AP.
Year	Use an "s" without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1890s, the 1800s.* Years are the only exception to the general rule that a figure is not used to start a sentence: *1976 was a very good year*.	Follows AP, but adds: Use semester and the year when referring to a specific semester, such as *Spring Semester 2022*.

	It is unnecessary to include the current year with dates for announcements or events. However, if more than one year is included, use the years for clarification.	
Time of day	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.* Avoid using the term midnight if it would create ambiguity about what day something is taking place, since some users' understandings may vary. Instead: *11:59 p.m. Thursday* or *12:01 a.m. Friday*.	Follows AP.

Miscellany		
	AP	SLCC
Active & Passive Voice	Not indicated.	Unless there is a strategic reason to use passive voice, strive to use active voice to ensure clarity. Active voice includes the "**agent**" of the action, who is responsible for the action. • Active: *The **faculty member** submitted the grades.* • Passive: *The grades were submitted on time.* (No agent) • Active: ***Jones** will complete the assignment by January.* Passive: *The assignment's deadline is January.*
Contacts	Not indicated.	When listing a contact, use the phone number and email address. For more information, contact Name, Position, Department, 801-957-4000 or howard.gunderson@slcc.edu. Howard Gunderson Position 801-957-4000 howard.gunderson@slcc.edu
Hyperlinks	Hyperlinks are used when writing webpages or interactive digital documents. In print, include full website URL.	When directing users to another webpage, avoid listing webpage addresses: *slcc.edu/students-future*. Instead, create hypertext. Try to place your hypertext at the end of a sentence or paragraph: • *Check out the Top 10 Reasons to Choose SLCC.* • *SLCC offers a host of financial aid products.*