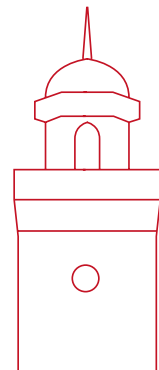


Editorial Style Guide



grow exponentially

This Guide is produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing at Acadia University. If you have any questions, please contact us:

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Our Editorial Style

Acadia University is proud of its reputation as a leading liberal arts institution. Our name and brand are recognized throughout Canada and around the world.

Every day, we create and distribute communication items – letters, emails, brochures, and newsletters – from all parts of our University. Each in its own way represents Acadia to the person who reads it. Writing in a clear, consistent style helps establish a strong and distinctive identity for Acadia.

Our audiences often overlap. The parent of a prospective student may also be a graduate, a legislator, a donor, or an employer of our graduates. A person may hear from the registrar’s office, admissions, housing and student advisors, or any other department on campus.

This *Editorial Style Guide* is a reference for non-academic communication, answering general questions on English style and usage. It is based on *The Canadian Press (CP) Stylebook* and *The CP Caps and Spelling Guide*. Please refer to them if your question is not answered here.

Plain Language

We encourage you to write in plain language, a style that is personal, clear, and simple. Plain language does not “dumb down” or oversimplify – in fact, it often uncovers ambiguities or uncertainties that may be hiding in dense, complex prose. There is strong evidence that using plain language reduces response errors and callbacks, which in turn saves time and money.

Plain language is *personal*: it talks about “me” and “you.” Instead of saying, “The department will provide the student with...”, say, “We will give you...”

Plain language is *clear*: it helps the reader by

- being well organized
- using a logical progression: each paragraph is a bridge to the next
- using short sections and useful headings
- using active voice, familiar words, simple sentences, and strong verbs
- defining technical terms and avoiding jargon
- using no more words than it needs to.

Plain language is *simple*: it’s close to the way we speak.

- It’s faster to read.
- It’s understood by a wider audience.
- Readers prefer it.
- Readers are more likely to comply and to make fewer mistakes.

If you want to know more about plain language, the Plain Language Association International is a good place to start.

“Broadly speaking, the short words are the best, and the old words best of all.”

– Winston Churchill



Diversity and Inclusion

Respect for other people includes being thoughtful in the language we use around gender, race or ethnicity, age, disability, religion, and sexuality. Today's acceptable word can be tomorrow's example of racism, sexism, or other abuse.

Acadia follows the *Canadian Press Stylebook* guidelines on inclusive language. Here are some examples.

Aboriginal Peoples

The Canadian Press uses uppercase for Aboriginal Peoples, which includes all Indian, Métis and Inuit people in Canada. First Nations is also uppercase. Other variations – indigenous people, aboriginals (except for Aboriginals of Australia), native peoples – are lowercase.

In all references, be guided by the preference of those concerned.

Use Indian with discretion. Some people object to it because it originated with the European explorers' misconception that they had landed in India. Others, especially status Indians, prefer it to be used.

Use native advisedly. Aboriginal and First Nations are more specific and are preferred by many in the community.

Where reasonable, prefer the actual name of the community – Cree, Mohawk, Blackfoot, Ojibwa – to a generality. For band names, use the spelling the band prefers, which is also the spelling used by the federal government. A good resource is the website for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, which lists the names of most aboriginal communities.

Nationalities and Race

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races and tribes.

Aboriginal Peoples, Arab, Caucasian, French-Canadian, Inuit, Jew, Latin, Asian, Cree

Note that black and white do not name races and are lowercase.

The term black is acceptable in all references in Canada and the United States. In the United States African-American is also used; in Canada African-Canadian is used by some people but not by others. In the United States there is a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, usually identified as the NAACP.

There is usually no need to use hyphenated descriptions such as Polish-Canadian or Jamaican-Canadian, given they may put an inappropriate emphasis on the person's ethnic background. But these descriptions can be used if the individual prefers it and it is relevant.

Sexism

Shoppers (not housewives) are paying more.

When writing in general terms, prefer police officer or constable to policeman, firefighter to fireman, mail carrier to mailman, flight attendant to stewardess.

Avoid cumbersome coinages like alderperson. Chairperson, salesperson and spokesperson are in general use and can be used.

There is not an entirely satisfactory substitute for fisherman, although fisher, fish harvester, fish industry worker, fishing licensees or the phrase fishermen and women are all possibilities.

Some readers find the use of he (him, his) as a word of common or indeterminate gender to be sexist. His or her and the like can be used but may prove awkward. In that case reword the sentence if



possible. Instead of: Anyone promoted will have \$50 added to his or her pay, write: Anyone promoted will get a \$50 raise. As a last resort, they (them, their) is an increasingly acceptable alternative to he (him, his).

Often a plural construction solves the sex problem:

Retired officers are not usually referred to by their former rank.

Not: A retired officer is not usually referred to by his or her former rank.

The generic man is regarded by some as excluding women. Instead of man or mankind, you can write people, human beings, humanity, human race. Alternatives to manmade include artificial, constructed, manufactured, synthetic.

Sexual Orientation

Gay and lesbian are the preferred terms to describe people attracted to the same sex. Homosexual is considered offensive by some; avoid except in clinical contexts and quotations. Use sexual orientation, not sexual preference. Language is still evolving on what to call the individuals in a same-sex relationship or marriage. Follow their preference if it is known. Boyfriend, girlfriend, partner, husband and wife are all acceptable options depending on situation and preference.

Transgender is usually regarded as a general term under which more specific descriptions, such as cross dresser, transvestite and transsexual, fall. Transsexual has a clinical definition as someone who identifies as a member of the sex opposite to that assigned at birth. Use a term the person in question uses (explain if necessary) and a pronoun consistent with how they live.

Acadia University Terms

Schools and Departments

Certain academic departments at Acadia are known by specific names:

F.C. Manning School of Business
Ivan Curry School of Engineering
Jodrey School of Computer Science
School of Education
School of Kinesiology
School of Music

Acadia has four faculties, each with individual departments:

Faculty of Theology (Acadia Divinity College)

Faculty of Arts

Economics
English and Theatre
History and Classics
Languages and Literatures
Music
Philosophy
Politics
Sociology

Faculty of Professional Studies

Business
Community Development
Education
Kinesiology

Faculty of Pure and Applied Science

Biology
Chemistry
Computer Science
Engineering
Earth and Environmental Science
Mathematics and Statistics
Nutrition and Dietetics
Physics
Psychology



Degrees

Do not include the word degree after a degree abbreviation:

He has a BA in history (not a BA degree in history).
bachelor's degree and master's degree; doctoral degree, doctorate; bachelor of arts, master of science, doctor of philosophy.

Degree abbreviations are best used in listings, while spelling out the degrees is more readable in regular text.

Set off degree names by commas when they follow personal names:

Mary Jones, master of science in biology, is the coordinator of the program.

Acadia offers programs of study leading to the following credentials:

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BAH	Bachelor of Arts with Honours
BAM	Bachelor of Arts in Music
BASc	Bachelor of Applied Science
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
BBAH	Bachelor of Business Administration with Honours
BCD	Bachelor of Community Development
BCDH	Bachelor of Community Development with Honours
BCS	Bachelor of Computer Science
BCSH	Bachelor of Computer Science with Honours
BCSS	Bachelor of Computer Science with Specialization
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BKin	Bachelor of Kinesiology
BKinH	Bachelor of Kinesiology with Honours
BM	Bachelor of Music
BMT	Bachelor of Music Therapy
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BSch	Bachelor of Science with Honours
BSN	Bachelor of Science in Nutrition
BSNH	Bachelor of Science in Nutrition with Honours
BTh	Bachelor of Theology
CAS	Certificate in Applied Science

CCS	Certificate in Computer Science
CMT	Certificate in Music Therapy
DMin	Doctor of Ministry
MA	Master of Arts
MAT	Master of Arts in Theology
MDiv	Master of Divinity
MEd	Master of Education
MSc	Master of Science
MTh	Master of Theology
PhD	Doctor of Educational Studies

Building Names and Map Codes

AAC	Acadia Athletics Centre
ALH	Alumni Hall (Wu Welcome Centre)
AMA	Andrew H. McCain Arena
BAC	Beveridge Arts Centre
BAN	Bancroft House
BIO	Biology Building
CAR	Carnegie Hall
CHA	Chase Court
CHI	Chipman House
CHP	Central Heating Plant
CLC	Clark Commons
CRF	Christofor Hall
CRO	Crowell Tower
CUT	Cutten House
DEN	Dennis House
DIV	Divinity College
EAT	Eaton House
ELL	Elliott Hall
EMM	Emmerson Hall
FOU	Sheldon L. Fountain Learning Commons
FTB	Festival Theatre Building
GOD	Godfrey House
H24	Centre for Organizational Research and Development
HAY	Hayward House
HDH	Harvey Denton Hall
HOR	Horton Hall
HSH	Huggins Science Hall
KCI	K. C. Irving Environmental Science Centre
MMC	Manning Memorial Chapel
MOR	Morton Property
PAT	Patterson Hall
RAY	Raymond House



RHO	Rhodes Hall
RJH	Roy Jodrey Hall
SEM	Seminary House
SER	Robie Roscoe Services Building
SUB	Students' Union Building
U52	DeWolfe House
UNH	University Hall
VML	Vaughan Memorial Library
W17	University Club (17 Westwood)
WHE	Wheelock Dining Hall
WHI	Whitman House
WIC	Wong International Centre
WIL	Willett House
WMG	War Memorial Gym
WMH	War Memorial House
WWC	Wu Welcome Centre

Use the full name for buildings on first reference, capitalizing Building, Hall, Centre, etc. Shortened versions are fine for later references (e.g., Jodrey Hall for Roy Jodrey Hall). Do not use acronyms for buildings.

Format for room names and numbers:

[University Hall, Room 206](#)

Acadia Style and Formats

When writing about Acadia University, use Acadia University first and follow with just Acadia. Uppercase University when you mean Acadia.

Contact Information Formats

Telephone Numbers

Do not use the numeral 1 before area codes. Proper form is (902) 555-5555. When listing separate home, office, and fax numbers, indicate them as follows:
 Office: (902) 555-5555, Ext. 226
 Home: (902) 555-5555
 Fax: (902) 555-5555

Email Addresses

Use the full email address, set in lowercase letters.
jane.doe@acadiau.ca

Web Addresses

For web addresses, include the entire address (omitting www.) Do not underline email and web addresses in regular text. If used in emails or online text, please hyperlink addresses to the corresponding page for easy navigation.

acadiau.ca

Mailing Addresses

Person/office/department
 Acadia University
 Wolfville, Nova Scotia, B4P 2R6
 Canada

Use official names of offices and departments in university addresses (Registrar's Office, not Office of the Registrar).

When listing mailing address, do not abbreviate the province. Use Nova Scotia (not NS) for the benefit of international students.

If you list an address in running text, use commas to separate elements, including Canada.

Registrar's Office, Acadia University, 15 University Avenue, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, B4P 2R6, Canada.

Course Names

Capitalize official course titles. Do not use quotation marks. Lowercase when making a general reference to courses, unless the subject includes a proper noun or adjective.

He wanted to sign up for Introduction to Philosophy.

She took English, history, and psychology courses.

Scholastic Grades

She got a B+, an A-, and three As this semester (no apostrophe in the plural).



Grammar and Usage

Punctuation

Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity (small-business sales may be different from small business sales). Use hyphens with all-, ex-, post-, self-, vice-, and -elect.

In Canadian usage, almost all closing punctuation marks go inside quotation marks: for example, in Canada we usually say “orient,” not “orientate.”

When using dashes as parentheses, use an en-dash with a space before and after: the Department of English and Theatre – which is part of the Faculty of Arts – is located in the Beveridge Arts Centre.

Date and time

In informal usage, the first two digits of a year can be replaced with an apostrophe. The apostrophe faces left, like a closing single quotation mark.

the class of '85, the '80s
Jane Doe ('85)

Use a.m. and p.m., except with morning, afternoon, evening, night, or o'clock.

11 p.m., 11:00 at night

Use noon and midnight, not 12 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Time zones, when needed: 2:30 p.m. (AST)

Italics or quotation marks

Italicize titles of films, books, plays, journals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, long poems, paintings, drawings, statues and other works of art, and musical compositions.

Use quotation marks for articles, chapter titles, dissertations and theses, papers read at meetings, exhibitions, lectures, short poems, songs, and television and radio shows.

Plural forms

For capital-letter abbreviations or decades in numerals, add a small s with no apostrophe:

CDs, DVDs, the 1960s

For single-word abbreviations, add an s before the period (figs.).

Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word (for example, Mr. for Mister and Prof. for Professor).

An acronym is a word, usually pronounced as such, formed from the initial letters of other words (for example, radar and NATO). There is debate about whether groups of letters that we don't pronounce as words (such as DNA) are technically acronyms, but for convenience we'll include them.

Avoid using abbreviations in running text (write Professor Johnson, not Prof. Johnson), and use only where the meaning is clear to readers. Normally spell out an acronym at its first occurrence (with its shortened form in parentheses right after it), unless it is widely recognized or almost never used in its spelled-out form – for example, DNA, DVD, ACOA, and CUPE.

Use a or an with an acronym?

Whether to use a or an depends on how we pronounce the abbreviation or the acronym: a NATO member, an LSAT test.

Addresses

Spell out names of provinces and countries in text, especially if used alone. Abbreviations may be used in lists, mailing addresses or where space is limited.

Abbreviations such as Ave., St., Blvd., Hwy., N., E., S., NW, SW are used on envelopes and labels but rarely in nontechnical text. Single-letter compass point abbreviations are followed by a period; two-letter ones appear without.

8 Queen St. E.; 4321 University Ave. SW



Company Names

In running text, write company names in full. Omit abbreviations such as Inc. and Ltd. unless they are relevant to the text. If you do use the abbreviations, do not place commas around them.

Dates

Use the month-day-year style, with commas after the day and year. If just the month and year are required, no commas are needed.

They chose July 18, 2016, as the day to begin the series.

They chose July 2016 as the month to begin the series.

Spell out names of days and months in running text. Do not abbreviate the words day, week, month and year.

Where space restrictions require abbreviations for days and months, use the following:

Mon. / Tues. / Wed. / Thurs. / Fri. / Sat. / Sun.

Jan. / Feb. / Mar. / Apr. / May / Jun. / Jul. / Aug. / Sep. / Oct. / Nov. / Dec.

etc., et al., i.e., e.g.

etc. stands for et cetera (“and other things,” not people). Do not use “and etc.” – et means “and.” It is generally not used in formal text (phrases such as “and so forth” will do) but may be used in lists and within parentheses. Place a comma before and after when used as the final item in a series, and do not italicize.

et al. stands for et alii (“and others,” meaning people, not things) and is used most often in bibliographies. When it follows a single item, no comma is needed; when it follows two or more, use commas as you would in a series.

i.e. (id est) means “that is” (in other words). Do not confuse with e.g. Used most often in parentheses. Place a comma after its use.

e.g. (exempli gratia), which means “for example.” Used most often in parentheses. Place a comma after its use.

Acadia University is in Atlantic Canada (i.e., in Nova Scotia, one of the four provinces of Atlantic Canada).

Acadia students come from many different parts of the world (e.g., Asia).

Names and Titles

Do not place a space between initials in names (John J. Jones, J.J. Jones)

Jr., Sr., I, and II. Use with full name only. Commas are no longer required around Jr. and Sr. (consistent with treatment of I and II).

Civil or Military Titles. Abbreviate preceding a full name; with surname alone, spell out.

Social Titles. Ms., Mrs., Dr., and Mr. are always abbreviated when preceding a name. Omit when an academic or professional designation follows the name.

Word Usage

Courtesy of George Orwell, here are six rules of writing well:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech that you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than saying anything outright barbarous.

Clichés

Avoid them like the plague. The *Canadian Press Stylebook* has a few things to say about clichés:

Tired expressions are indeed tiresome. No one needs to read about a program being unveiled or the lucky lottery winner for whom Christmas came early.

But use a cliché if it expresses your meaning exactly and if it will spare the reader some cumbersome



second choice. It would be hard to improve on such gems as sour grapes, cry wolf or tip of the iceberg, which sum up complex ideas in a few words.

Avoid the automatic or lazy cliché: grind to a halt, a parent's worst nightmare, in the wake of, in happier times, seriously consider, shock waves, lucky to be alive

And the fad term: downsize, peer group, quantify, wannabe, yuppie, couch potato

And the fossil that no longer conjures the faintest image: moot point, short shrift, at loggerheads, by the same token

Capitalization and Spelling

Acadia University follows the Canadian Press Stylebook recommendation for using capitals in a modified down style. That is, where a reasonable choice exists, we use lowercase. The use of too many capitals will distract the reader and take away from the significance of the proper nouns, adjectives, and pronouns that clearly call for capitalization.

Capitalize proper names, trade names, government departments and agencies, associations, companies, clubs, religions, languages, nations, race, places, and addresses. Use lowercase where a reasonable option exists.

Acadia uses Canadian spelling. If in doubt, please refer to the Canadian Oxford Dictionary. An exception would be when you are quoting text that is in a non-Canadian style; in that case, use the source's original spelling.

Capitalization and Spelling Guide

A

aboriginal
Acadia Students' Union (ASU)
Acadia University Board of Governors, but the board advisor (not adviser)
alumna: a female graduate
alumnae: two or more female graduates
alumni: two or more male graduates or a mixed group
alumnus: a male graduate
a.m.
analyze (not analyse)

B

bachelor's degree
Band-Aid (bandage preferred)
Business, School of
business degree

C

centre
centred on, not centred around
chair (rather than chairperson, chairman, or chairwoman)
chemical elements and compounds: lowercase when written out
Convocation

D

degrees: see list elsewhere in this guide (graduates possess a bachelor's degree, a master's or a doctorate)
Department of Biology (but he is in the biology department)

E

Earth (proper name), but the earth circles the sun.
email
enrol, enrolled, enrolment



F

faculty are (when referred to as individual members)
faculty is (when referred to as a group)
favour
fibre
flavour
fundraising, fundraiser, fundraise

G

governors, but Acadia University Board of Governors
Grade Point Average (GPA)
graduand (about to graduate)
graduate

H

home page
Homecoming
honorary degree
honour, honourable

I

Internet

M

master's degree

N

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
of Canada (NSERC)

O

off-campus and on-campus housing; but they live
off campus or on campus
online

P

per cent (avoid the symbol %), percentage, five per
cent increase (no hyphens)
p.m.
practise (verb), practice (noun)
Professor Mark Smith; but Mark Smith, professor of
English
program (not programme)

R

Registrar's Office (not Office of the Registrar)
Royal Society of Canada

S

seasons and semesters: summer school, fall
semester (lower case)
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
of Canada (SSHRC)
Styrofoam (plastic foam preferred)

T

theatre

U

undergraduate
university-wide (but provincewide, campuswide,
nationwide)
U.S. – the abbreviation for the nation
US – American dollar currency, as in US\$100

V

versus: abbreviated as vs. in sports schedules and
names of court cases
vice-president
vice-chancellor
vice-chair

W

web, web page, website, webcast, webmaster, web
server
Welcome Week
World Wide Web

X

Xerox (photocopier preferred)



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