METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
EDITORIAL STANDARDS

Adhering to a consistent set of editorial standards is critical to the enhancement of MSU Denver's image and reputation. For more information about the University's brand and brand standards, visit Brand Central. **msudenver.edu/brandcentral**

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Consistent editorial style enhances the effectiveness of MSU Denver communications. Apply these guidelines when writing and editing non-academic communications for MSU Denver, including publications, speeches, Web copy and news releases. (These guidelines are not intended for technical or academic writing.) They apply to written material intended for audiences that span the wide range of MSU Denver constituencies, from the campus community to the general public.

For topics not covered in the Editorial Standards Guide, refer to the Associated Press Stylebook as a primary reference.

Questions?
Email brandcentral@msudenver.edu

USING OUR NAME
The strength of our brand relies on consistent, appropriate use of the University's name.

Always use the full name **Metropolitan State University of Denver** when you refer to the University for the first time in a publication, website, video or other communication piece. On second reference you may use **the University** or **MSU Denver**—a moniker that emphasizes the "U" in "university" and our urban location in the city of Denver.
- Do not use "the" prior to the full name, as in: The Metropolitan State University of Denver offers 55 undergraduate majors.
- Do not use "of" in the shortened name, as in: MSU of Denver offers 55 undergraduate majors.
- Do not refer to the institution as "Metro" or "Metro State" in formal written communications. (Athletics may continue to use Metro State to refer to the University's athletic teams, and "Metro State" may be used in a direct quote.)
- Never use "University of Denver" in a stand-alone context when writing about MSU Denver. Ensure that lines do not break to read "University of Denver."
- Do not use the acronym MSUD to describe the University.

STYLE GUIDELINES

Academic degrees

When mention of degrees is necessary to establish credentials, avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase. List only the terminal degree for that field of study.

Examples:

Nell Jones, who has a doctorate in philosophy...

Bill Smith, who has a master of fine arts degree...

Abbreviations are acceptable in a case where many persons with degrees are being listed. Use abbreviations only after the full name of a person (never after just a last name).

Example:

Cooper Grant, Ph.D.

Spell out and use the lower case for degrees: bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctorate.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor's degree, a master's, etc., but there is no apostrophe in bachelor of arts, bachelor of science or master of science.

Do not precede a name with a title of an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for that degree.

Right: Sandra Haynes, Ph.D., is dean of the College of Professional Studies.

Wrong: Dr. Sandra Haynes, Ph.D., is dean of the College of Professional Studies.

Academic departments and University offices

Uppercase *department* or *office* in both the official and complete formal name and the informal name.

Example:

MSU Denver Department of Accounting, Accounting Department

Use lowercase for the word *department* when it stands alone.

Example:

She's been with the department for three years.

Acronyms

Aerospace and Engineering Sciences
When referring to the educational program, follow with "initiative." When referring to the facility or building, designate as such. On first reference, refer to the *Aerospace and Engineering* Sciences initiative/facility. *AES* is acceptable on second reference for internal audiences.

Auraria Higher Education Center
Auraria Campus is the preferred usage. *AHEC* is acceptable on second reference for internal audiences.

Board of Trustees
Do not use an acronym to refer to this board.

Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis
On first reference, refer to the *Metropolitan State University of Denver Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis*, the *MSU Denver Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis* or the *Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis at MSU Denver*. *CAVEA* is acceptable on second reference.

Center for Individualized Learning
Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

Center for Innovation
On first reference, refer to the *Metropolitan State University of Denver Center for Innovation*, the *MSU Denver Center for Innovation*, or the *Center for Innovation at MSU Denver*. Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

Center for Urban Connections
Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

Center for Urban Education
Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

Center for Visual Art
CVA is acceptable on second reference.

College of Business
Do not use an acronym to refer to this college.

College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Do not use an acronym to refer to this college.

College of Professional Studies
Do not use an acronym to refer to this college.

Colorado Commission on Higher Education
CCHE is acceptable on second reference.

Colorado Department of Education
  Refer to *the department* on second reference.

Colorado Opportunity Fund
  COF is acceptable on second reference.

Community College of Denver
  CCD is acceptable on second reference.

Educational Technology Center
  Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

First Year Success Program
  Do not use an acronym to refer to this center.

Hispanic Serving Institution
  HSI is acceptable on second reference.

Hospitality, Tourism and Events
  HTE is acceptable on second reference to the major.

Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center
  HLC is acceptable on second reference.

Information Technology
  Do not use an acronym to refer to this department.

One World One Water Center for Urban Water Education and Stewardship
  OWOW, the *One World One Water Center* or *the center* are acceptable on second reference.

Regional Transportation District
  RTD is acceptable in all references to the metropolitan Denver and Front Range transit system.

Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference
  RMAC is acceptable on second reference.

School of Education
  Do not use an acronym to refer to this school.

Student Success Building
  SSB is acceptable on second reference.

University of Colorado Denver
  CU Denver is acceptable on second reference.

Advisor/adviser
The -or ending (advisor) is preferred over the -er ending (adviser). This is contrary to the AP Stylebook, but it is the spelling used by the Academic Advising department at MSU Denver.

Affiliate
Used to describe faculty hired on a temporary track. Do not use "adjunct."

African American
No hyphen. This MSU Denver style guideline is contrary to AP style, where African American is hyphenated.

Alumni
Alumni is the general-use term for former students of the University, whether or not they graduated from MSU Denver. Use alumni to refer to a group of men and women who attended MSU Denver.

Gender-specific forms of the word are as follows: alumna (singular, female), alumnae (plural, women only), alumnus (singular, male), alumni (plural, men only or men and women).

The term alum (plural: alums) is slang for alumnus or alumna. Use it only in very informal usages.

Avoid the cumbersome alumnus/a or alumnus/alumna by using the word *graduate*.

Alumni Office
The official designation of the on-campus office that deals with MSU Denver alumni services and relationships is the Office of Alumni Relations, but it may be referred to more familiarly as the Alumni Relations Office in less-formal usages.

Alumni Association
The Alumni Association is an organization made up of MSU Denver alumni, governed by the Alumni Association Board of Directors, referred to more familiarly as the Alumni Association Board.

Alumni class years
When specifying a graduate's degree, class year and major, use parentheses and an apostrophe with a shortened class year.
> *Example:*
> Nell Jones (B.A. marketing '13)

For alumnae who have changed their name, include the birth name in parenthesis before the married name.
> *Example:*
> Joanne (Clark) Hospel (B.A. math '74)

In external formal documents and correspondence, as well as information prepared for the media, the relation of the graduate to the University should be written out.
> *Example:*
> Kathy Mallon, a 1990 alumna of MSU Denver, has joined the University's Office of Sponsored Programs.

Board of Trustees
Use uppercase when it refers to MSU Denver's governing body.
   Example:
      The Board of Trustees will meet on Monday.

But use lowercase when referring to the board by itself or trustees by themselves.
   Example:
      The board will meet in February with most trustees attending.

Buildings and classrooms
Specific buildings and classrooms are generally capitalized, as follows. When writing for an internal audience, it is acceptable to use the approved campus abbreviations as shown below.

Special building projects, such as the Campus Expansion Project, should be capitalized.

AD	Administration Building
AR	Arts Building
CC	Auraria Early Learning center
CN	Central Classroom
FA	Facilities Annex
FM	Facilities Management
HLC	Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center
KC	King Center for the Performing Arts
LM	Library
NC	North Classroom
PE	Physical Education Building
PL	Plaza Building
RO	Rectory Building
SA	St. Cajetan's
SI	Science Building
SE	St. Elizabeth's
SF	St. Francis Center
SO	South Classroom
SSB	Student Success Building
TE	Technology Building
TV	Tivoli Student Union
WC	West Classroom

Commencement
Uppercase when referring to the MSU Denver graduation ceremony.
Example:
    Register for Commencement by Friday.
    The Fall Commencement ceremony took place on Saturday.

Committees
Capitalize the formal names of groups and committees, such as Faculty Senate, Long-Range Planning Committee, and the President's Student Advisory Council. Use lowercase for the words committee or council when they stand alone.

Course names
Use uppercase only for specific course names that differ from a normal generic reference.
Examples:
    His course analyzed early modern art.
    He taught a class called Early Modern Art.
    She taught Global Environmental Challenges.

Do not use numbered class listings (such as Chemistry 1800) except in certain internal contexts, such as a list of major requirements.

Course work
The preferred usage is course work, not coursework.

Dates
When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate the following: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sep., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out the month when using it alone, or with a year alone. When used with a complete date, use a comma before the year. In a partial date, the year is not set off in commas.
Examples:
    On June 30, 2004, the fiscal year ended.
    His birthday is Jan. 23, 1971.
    Classes will resume in August 2005.
    What began in spring 2003 ended in summer 2004.
    The show runs Oct. 8, 2013, through Feb. 8, 2014.

Do not add the ordinal suffix (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 15th) to the day of the month.
    Right: He will arrive on March 26.
    Wrong: He will arrive on March 26th.

Days of the week
In most cases, list dates, but not days of the week. Invitations may include both the day and the date, but take care to ensure accuracy.
    Right: She gave a lecture on March 26.
    Wrong: She gave a lecture on Monday, March 26.
    Wrong: She gave a lecture on Monday.

Diverse ethnic backgrounds
Use "of color," "diverse ethnic backgrounds," or "ethnically diverse" instead of "ethnic minority(ies)."
Only use "minority" when it is part of an official title or name.
  Examples:
    MSU Denver has the largest number of students of color of all Colorado's higher education institutions.
    MSU Denver's goal is to increase the number of instructors from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
    The number of ethnically diverse students enrolled in STEM majors has skyrocketed.

Faculty, faculty members
The words faculty and staff are generally lowercase. The faculty (or staff) as a whole is a singular collective noun, referring to the group.
    Right: The faculty is represented by the Faculty Senate.
    Wrong: The faculty are a talented group.

An individual is a member of the faculty/staff or a faculty/staff member, not a faculty, and a few people are not faculty but faculty members or members of the faculty.
  Example:
    Faculty members disagree about the best place to park.

Grade point average
Abbreviate to GPA (all capitals, no periods) after first reference.

Graduated
    Right: He graduated from college.
    Wrong: He graduated college.

Hispanic
Latino is the preferred term.

Homecoming
Uppercase when referring to the annual MSU Denver event.
  Examples:
    The 2013 Homecoming bonfire was a success.
    The Homecoming King and Queen were named.

Honors
Use lowercase and italicize *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*.

Latino
Latino is preferred over Hispanic.

Light rail
Two words when used as a noun. Hyphenate when used as a compound adjective.
> *Examples:*
> Light rail is a convenient way to get to campus.
> She caught the train at the light-rail station.

Majors
Use lowercase for majors with the exception of languages, which are proper nouns.
> *Example:*
> Amy is a physics major, but Scott's major is English.

Numerals
Spell out whole numbers from one to nine; use figures for numbers 10 and above.
> *Example:*
> The seminar has eight women and 12 men.

Use numerals, even if the number is below 10, for:
- ages
- credit hours
- days of the month
- degrees of temperature
- dimensions
- figures with decimals
- latitude and longitude
- measurements
- page numbers
- percentages
- room numbers
- sums of money
- times of day

Spell out the word million.
> *Examples:*
> The grant was for $3 million.
> Colorado's population is 4.3 million.

Never begin a sentence with a numeral; spell out the numeral or recast the sentence. The only correct use of a numeral to start a sentence is when citing a calendar year.
> *Examples:*
> 1958 was a memorable year.
> Twenty-two students organized the bake sale.
> Last year 117 employees were hired.

President of MSU Denver
In a first reference to President Jordan, use his title and full name.
Examples:
MSU Denver President Stephen Jordan spoke to the Rotary Club on Thursday.
Stephen Jordan, president of MSU Denver, received the Civil Rights Award.

In subsequent references, refer to him simply as Jordan.

Semesters
Do not capitalize semesters in text.
Examples:
During the spring semester, it rained.
Tuition will increase in fall 2013.

Student class designations
Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior or senior.
Examples:
A sophomore from Aurora …
… he's a junior nursing major
The senior class …

Additionally, use care when pluralizing freshman. Freshman serves as an adjective when placed with a noun; freshmen can stand alone.
Right: The freshman class is large.
Right: A group of freshmen took the lead.
Right: Several freshman students met off campus.

Capitalize Class when referring to a specific graduating class.
Example:
The Class of 1976

Telephone numbers
Do not use parentheses for area codes. Use dashes to separate the elements.
Example:
303-556-1212

Theatre, theater
Use theatre, rather than theater. This is contrary to the AP Stylebook, but it is the spelling used by the theatre program at MSU Denver.

Time of day
Do not use :00 for times that fall on the hour. Use lowercase for a.m. and p.m., with periods after each letter and no space between.
Examples:
8 a.m.
6 p.m.
7:30 p.m.

Use an en dash with no spaces when indicating a time span. When indicating a time span with both times falling within either a.m. or p.m., list a.m. or p.m. just once at the end. Use an en dash between start and finish times to indicate spans of time.
Examples:
8:30 p.m.–1 a.m.
9–11 a.m., not 9 a.m.–11 a.m.

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

Avoid redundancies.
Right: 10 a.m. today.
Wrong: 10 a.m. this morning.

Titles
Capitalize titles when they appear before the name, but use lowercase after the name.
Examples:
Psychology Chair Bill Jones
Bill Jones, chair of the Psychology Department

Do not capitalize before the name if it is more of an occupational description than a formal title.
Example:
The students liked writer Priscilla Smith and health educator Max Rigotti.

Undocumented immigrant
Use "undocumented immigrant" or "undocumented worker" rather than "illegal alien."
This usage contradicts AP style.

Web terms
Lowercase is preferred for compound words using the "web" prefix: website, webcam, webcast and webmaster. But for terms with separate words, Web (short for World Wide Web) is capitalized.
Examples:
a Web page
a Web address
the Web
my website

"Email" and "online" are not hyphenated. But other e- words are hyphenated, such as e-commerce and e-book.

When spelling out Web addresses, if www is part of the address, do not precede with http.
Right: www.msudenver.edu (msudenver.edu also is acceptable)
Wrong: http://www.msudenver.edu

PUNCTUATION GUIDELINES
Commas
In a series of three or more items, do not use a comma before the final conjunction (and/or) unless it is needed for clarity and ease of reading.
Example:
He has classes in chemistry, psychology and music.

Hyphens
Hyphenate compound adjectives when they precede the noun that they modify.
Examples:
off-campus party
14th-century art

Do not hyphenate them when they stand alone.
Example:
She lives off campus.

Also, do not put a hyphen between an adverb ending in -ly and the adjective it modifies.
Example:
He has a newly furnished office.

Semicolons
Use a semicolon in a series of items if one or more of the items in the list contains a comma or to separate two complete but related ideas within a sentence.
Example:
Be sure to bring warm clothes; something to read, such as a good book; and a good umbrella, just in case it rains.

Example:
I made an appointment with an advisor; I hope to select next semester's courses soon.

Colons
Capitalize the first letter after a colon only if it is the beginning of a sentence that could stand alone.
Example:
Remember this: The only thing you really need is confidence.

Exclamation points
Avoid exclamation points unless they are truly used as part of an exclamation. It is always better to write forcefully to convey enthusiasm rather than to load your copy with exclamation marks.

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