

University of Michigan School of Education Style Guide

We take our lead from the University of Michigan Editorial Style Guide (<http://mmd.umich.edu/forum/styleguide.php>)

As a supplement, we turn to the *Chicago Manual of Style*

Academic degrees

- No periods (PhD, BA, BS, etc.)
- The names of degrees are lowercased when referred to generically (a master's degree, a doctoral program, a doctoral degree, a doctorate, a fellowship, a master of arts degree)
- Master's always has an apostrophe

Examples:

- David Morris completed a BS in mechanical engineering last May. His cousin, Sue Elliot, earned a BA in communications the previous December. Her brother earned his doctor of music degree three years ago. Her sister has a master of fine arts in theater performance.
- Mary Chen (MHSA '06) returned to U-M in 2003 to work on her master's degree in health services administration.
- Carlos Alvarez (MMus '92) performs regularly as a guest violinist with orchestras around the world. (For an alumni publication.)
- (But for a general readership.) Carlos Alvarez ('92), who holds a master's degree in music performance from U-M, performs regularly as a guest violinist with orchestras around the world.

Address Format

Deborah Loewenberg Ball
Dean
University of Michigan School of Education
Room 1110
610 East University Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259

Alumnus (male singular), alumna (female singular), alumni (male plural—may also be used for mixed-gender groups), alumnae (female plural). Less formal alternatives are *graduate* or *graduates*.

Capitalization of Institutions and Programs

- University of Michigan School of Education; School of Education; the university; the school; the MAC program

Capitalization of Terms

- Do not capitalize fall term, winter term, or spring term unless one begins a sentence

Capitalization of Titles

Examples:

- Dean Deborah Loewenberg Ball; the dean attended the meeting, which was held in the dean's office; Deborah Loewenberg Ball, dean of the University of Michigan School of Education
- Hyman Bass, Roger Lyndon Collegiate Professor of Mathematics (LSA) and professor of mathematics education; Professor Bass
- Susan Neuman, professor of educational studies
- Lyonel Milton, director of student affairs; Director Lyonel Milton

Commas (Serial Comma)

- Use a comma before the conjunction and the final element in a list.

Example:

- The students were advised to bring pens, pencils, and paper to the seminar.

Dates

- No comma is needed between a month and a year. Commas are required before and after a year when month, date, and year are used. Use cardinal numbers (January 1, August 23, etc.), not ordinal numbers (January 1st, August 23rd, etc.)

Examples:

- She began her studies in September 1999 and completed them in May 2003.
- She began her studies on September 1, 1999, and completed them on May 12, 2003.

Email and the World Wide Web

- The Web (but webpage, webmaster, website)
- The Internet but internet protocols, internet services, internet architecture
- Homepage and subpage (but landing page)
- Email (email) but e-newsletter, e-communications, e-marketing, e-commerce, etc.
- URLs do not need "http://"

Emeritus (male singular), emerita (female singular), emeriti (male plural—may also be used for mixed-gender groups), emeritae (female plural)

LSA, not LS&A

That/Which

- “That” defines and restricts; “which” does not. In general, if the information in a clause adds critical meaning to a sentence use that without a comma. When introducing a clause that does not add critical meaning to the sentence, precede it with a comma and which.

Examples:

- The data that Bill gave you is wrong; Sarah’s data is correct. (This version makes an important distinction about whose data should be used.)
- The data, which Bill gave you, is wrong. (There is only one set of data being referenced. Who delivered it is irrelevant to the fact that it is wrong.)

Prepositions at the End of Sentences

- In recent years, the hard and fast rule about never ending a sentence with a preposition has loosened a bit. As long as the normal rules of good writing apply, it is acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition if doing so adds clarity and avoids the creation of a convoluted or awkward sentence.

Examples:

- Where did she come from? (This would be preferable to the rather stilted From where did she come? or archaic, yet correct, Whence came she?)
- It’s nothing to laugh about.
- I can’t imagine what he’s been through.

SOE, not the SOE or SoE**Split Infinitive**

- Apply the same reasoning here as to prepositions at the end of sentences by allowing them for clarity of meaning. A good rule of thumb: don’t split the to and the verb with a lengthy phrase.

Example:

- “The university expects the need for off-campus housing to double in the next ten years.” is preferable to “The university expects to, within the next ten years, double its need for off-campus housing.”

State and City Abbreviations

- Spell out state and city names in running text (especially if your audience might include international readers). Follow U.S. Postal Service format abbreviations in addresses or if the copy is a lengthy list of place names. Do not use city abbreviations such as NYC, L.A., Chi., etc. The exception is the use of St. for Saint, such as St. Louis or St. Paul. (Note that the second example needs semicolons between entries because individual items in the list include commas.)

Examples:

- The class included students from Alaska, Colorado, Georgia, Montana, and West Virginia.
- The donors came from: Los Angeles, CA; Miami, FL; Chicago, IL; Ft. Wayne, IN; Shreveport, LA; Midland, MI; St. Paul, MN; and Cincinnati, OH.
- Alumni in Fort Wayne, Indiana and St. Paul, Minnesota gave the largest bequests.

Telephone

- Telephone, not phone
- 734-123-1234

Time: Use periods with a.m. and p.m.

U-M, not the U-M or UM or U of M, etc.

United States; U.S.; USA (periods with U.S. but not with USA)

Who/Whom

- Traditionally, “who” is the subject of a sentence. “Whom” is the object of the verb and usually takes a preposition. That said, whom is currently not used very often in natural colloquial speech or informal writing. As with other trouble spots, it’s best to try and avoid them by rewriting the phrase in a way that is both natural and grammatically correct.

Examples:

- She is someone for whom I have the greatest affection. (Correct but stilted.)
- She is someone I have the greatest affection for. (Acceptable, but technically wrong.)
- I have the greatest affection for her. (Correct and natural-sounding.)
- In informal writing, it is acceptable at times to replace whom with who and place the preposition at the end, especially for interrogative cases in which rewriting is not practical.

Examples:

- To whom did you give the book? » Who did you give the book to?
- About whom are you talking? » Who are you talking about?