Montgomery College Editorial Style Guide

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Contents

About This Guide

This guide provides the College's preferred standards for official correspondence, reports, and messages to the community. Created by the Office of Communications and based on the *Associated Press Stylebook*, this guide should be adopted by all College staff and faculty who routinely write, edit, proofread, review, and otherwise produce written correspondence.

As a reference, this style guide should be consulted first, as it supersedes other references. For items not covered in this guide, consult the following:

- **Associated Press Stylebook**

- **Elements of Style** by Strunk and White
  bartleby.com/141

- **Merriam-Webster's Dictionary**
  merriam-webster.com (online) or *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition*

For guidance on web terms and usage, refer to

- **Montgomery College Web Style Guide**
  montgomerycollege.edu/website-resources/mc-web-style-guide.html

For more style guidance, contact the Office of Communications, 240-567-1772 or 240-567-7946, or send an email to editor@montgomerycollege.edu.

For guidance in **design and logo treatments** used in Montgomery College publications, stationery, signage, and other applications, including the College website, please contact the Communications Office.

Note: *The logo and official College names have registered trademark protection, and any use of the logo or official College names other than those prescribed by the Communications Office is prohibited, regardless of funding sources.*

About Our Name

Our official name is Montgomery College, not Montgomery Community College. Prior to 1969, the College was named Montgomery Junior College. "MC" is acceptable after a first reference to "Montgomery College," but it should not be used repeatedly or solely in text. Using "Montgomery" alone is not acceptable.

Note: The College introduced a new logo and branding in August 2025. For guidance with graphic standards, including fonts, colors, and logo usage, please consult the Montgomery College Brand Guidelines, available for download from media.montgomerycollege.edu/communications/marketing-communications-website/mcbrandguide/assets/MontColl_BrandGuidelines.pdf.

Style Dos and Don'ts

1. **DO** capitalize "board," "campus," "foundation," "institute," "program" when these terms are used as proper nouns or when used in a headline or title.

   Montgomery College Board of Trustees
   Alumni Association Board of Directors
   Artwalk takes place annually at the Rockville Campus each spring.
   the Montgomery College Foundation
   the Honors Program

   DON'T use upper case for these words when they are used as common nouns, or in general terms.

   The board will consider the proposal at the next meeting.
   The foundation will meet in November.
   The institute will accept applications in February for the fall semester.
   the radiologic technology program

2. **DO** capitalize "college" when referring to Montgomery College as the College. This is an exception to the rule on using lowercase for second and other subsequent references.

   The College opened in September 1946.

   DON'T capitalize (unless it is used in a headline or title) or hyphenate "collegewide".

   The president will send a collegewide memo.

3. **DO** capitalize an academic degree when it is abbreviated. Spelled-out terms should be lowercased in normal prose.

   A.A., A.A.S., A.S., or associate's degree, associate of applied science, associate of science

   B.A., B.S., or bachelor's degree, bachelor's
   M.A., M.S., or master of arts, master of science, master's degree, master's
   Ed.D., Ph.D., or doctoral degree, doctorate
   M.B.A., M.F.A., or master of business administration, master of fine arts
   Plural*: masters of arts, bachelors of science, M.A.s, and Ph.D.s*

   Exception: Periods in degrees are not used in MC website copy.

   DON'T use the word "degree" with an abbreviated academic degree. And don't use an apostrophe for plural forms. (e.g., B.A.s)

   Professor Smith has a Ph.D. in history.

   Wrong*: He also has a B.A. degree in history.*

4. **DO** capitalize titles and offices, such as "president," "professor," when the title directly precedes the person's name. Use lowercase when the title follows the person's name.

   Montgomery College President Jermaine F. Williams spoke at the conference.
   Jermaine F. Williams, president, introduced the keynote speaker.

   DON'T capitalize "president," "professor," "officer," "supervisor," "administrative aide," or any other professional title when it follows the person's name (usually set off by commas in a sentence), regardless of rank or executive level.

   Exception: In promotional or other formal contexts (e.g., a displayed list of donors in an annual report or honored guests at commencement), titles can be capitalized when following a personal name.

Style Dos and Don'ts

5. **DO** use a serial comma (also called an Oxford comma) between the last item in a list, before "and" or "or" in text.

    A, B, and C

    DON'T use the serial comma in online copy or press releases.
    This follows online usage trends.

6. **DO** use hyphens in phone numbers.

    240-567-5000

    DON'T use parentheses or periods or any other symbols to separate digits in phone numbers.

7. **DO** use this format for time and time ranges: numeral+space+a.m. or p.m. (with periods in a.m. and p.m.). Use an en-dash for time ranges (not a dash); in text, use "from" and "to," instead of dashes.

    2 p.m.; 3–5 p.m.; 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
    9 a.m.–noon; 9 p.m. to midnight;
    The class will meet from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

    See Punctuation Guide (p.20) for more on dash usage.

A to Z Guide

abbreviations and acronyms In general, use abbreviations and acronyms only in contexts where they are clear to readers. On first use, spell out a term as a courtesy to readers who might not easily recognize it, with the abbreviation or acronym immediately following in parentheses, if the reference will be used more than once. Generally, omit periods in acronyms unless the result would spell an unrelated word.

Academic Affairs Division

academic courses Capitalize specific titles of Montgomery College courses.

> *Principles of Accounting, ACCT 201*

> **Wrong:** *She is an Accounting major.*

academic degrees When using the abbreviation, use capital letters and omit the word "degree."

> *A.A., A.A.S., A.S., or associate's degree, associate of applied science, associate of science*
> *B.A., B.S., or bachelor's degree, bachelor's*
> *M.A., M.S., or master of arts, master of science, master's degree, master's*
> *Ed.D., Ph.D., or doctoral degree, doctorate*
> *M.B.A., M.F.A., or master of business administration, master of fine arts*
> *Professor Smith has a Ph.D. in history.*

> **Wrong:** *He also has a BA degree in history.*

> **Plural:** *masters of arts, bachelors of science, M.A.s, and Ph.D.s*

> **Exception:** *Periods in degrees are not used in MC website copy.*

academic subjects Use lower case for an academic subject unless it is the name of a language.

> *He took biology and English.*

academic titles When including an academic degree or credential with a person's name, omit the courtesy title (also called social title) in the same reference.

> *Elena Saenz, Ed.D. or Dr. Elena Saenz*
> *Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, President Williams*

> **Exception:** *President Jermaine F. Williams, Ed.D.* (both, often used in formal correspondence with a signature line)

ACES, Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success

Achieving the Dream, ATD

Achieving the Promise Academy, ATPA

addresses For campus addresses, no comma is needed between building name and room number and/or the word "room." (See samples below). Spell out Building, Center, Campus, Route in text; abbreviations are acceptable in lists, tables, and letters. Single-letter compass points accompanying street names are normally followed by a period; two-letter abbreviations are not. Campus maps (available online and in the MC Catalog) show appropriate abbreviations for campus buildings.

> *Macklin Tower 123, MT 123*
> *Humanities Building 216, HU 216*
> *The Commons 211*
> *N. Campus Drive*

> **Wrong:** *Room 123, Macklin Tower or 123 Macklin Tower*

> **abbreviations:** Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., St. only with a numbered address: 51 Mannakee St. All similar words (e.g., alley, drive, road, etc.) always are spelled out.

> **compass points:** *N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW* (Note: No periods in quadrant abbreviations.)

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Administrative and Fiscal Services Division

Admissions and Enrollment Management (the entire unit)

Advancement and Community Engagement Division

advisor (formerly, adviser)

alphabetization Alphabetize names, abbreviations, and acronyms by last name (surname) literally, not according to what they stand for. Alphabetize hyphenated names by the last word (or hyphenated word) in the name.

> **courses (acronyms)**: *CCJS—Criminal Justice; CMSC—Computer Science and Technologies; COMM—Communications Studies*
> **or**
> *Communications Studies (COMM); Computer Science and Technologies (CMSC); Criminal Justice (CCJS)*
>
> **hyphenated names**: *Allison Bell-Smith Rinehart* (alphabetize under R)*; Allison Rinehart Bell-Smith (alphabetize under B), and Allison Bell Smith* (alphabetize under S).
>
> **surnames**: *MacSorley, Ian; McRae, Gordon; Saint Laurent, Yves; St. Denis, Ruth*

alumna (singular, female) a person who attended or graduated from MC

alumnae (plural, female)

alumni (plural) former students who have attended or graduated from the College

alumnus (singular, male) a person who attended or graduated from MC

Athenaeum Symposia, official/formal name is **Frank Islam Athenaeum Symposia Speaker Series**

Black Box Theatre

Bioscience Education Center, BE

board (only capitalize when used as a proper name, e.g., Montgomery College Board of Trustees; otherwise, "The board will consider the proposal.")

board of directors (in reference to the governing bodies of the Montgomery College Foundation and the Pinkney Innovation Complex for Science and Technology)

board of governors (MC Alumni Association volunteer leadership)

Board of Trustees (BOT) (in reference to Montgomery College volunteer leadership) A current board member list is available online at montgomerycollege.edu/bot.

books and periodicals Italicize titles of books and periodicals. (see also Quotes, Italics, or Nothing?)

> *For Whom the Bell Tolls, Newsweek, The Washington Post*

campus, Campus Capitalize only when it is part of a proper name.

> *Artwalk takes place at the Rockville Campus each spring.*
> *Students at all three campuses ride the shuttle for free.*

campus buildings, departments, divisions, and offices On first reference, capitalize the name of the academic building, department, division, or office when it is used as the official name and is followed by the word "building," "department," "division," or "office." On second reference, without the full title, use lowercase.

> *Humanities Building, Learning Center, the center* (on second reference)
> *Media Arts and Technologies Department, the department*
> (on second reference)
> *Office of Student Life, the office* (on second reference)

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Career and Technology Education (CTE) Programs of Study

CE Designator for credit by examination; **CE-G** indicates the exam is given at the Germantown Campus; **CE-R** indicates the exam is given at the Rockville Campus; **CE-T** indicates the exam is given at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus.

Center for Early Education (CEE)

Center for Teaching and Learning, CTL, the CTL

centuries, decades, years Spell out in lowercase letters. Decades may be spelled out or expressed in numerals. No apostrophe is needed between the year and the *s*. Use numerals if decades are identified by their century. Informally, the full number of a particular year is sometimes abbreviated. Note direction of the apostrophe.

> *the 19th century; the sixties and seventies*
> *the '80s, the 1920s; the class of '90;*
> *He was in the class of '57.*

certificate Use lowercase for generic references.

> *He received a certificate in technical writing.*

chair (not chairman, chairwoman)

Charlene R. Nunley Student Services Center, (ST)

child care denotes services provided at the College's Center for Early Education (not childcare) (also, respite care)

co-chair (not co-chairperson)

collective nouns and their verbs When the subject is a collective noun conveying the idea of unity or multitude (e.g., faculty, committee), the verb and pronouns are singular. When the subject is a collective noun conveying the idea of plurality, the verb is plural.

> *The committee is meeting on April 1. (unity, singular verb)*
> *The faculty are attending a conference. (plurality, plural verb)*

College, collegewide Capitalize "college" only when referring to Montgomery College. This is an exception to the rule on using lowercase for second and other subsequent references. The term collegewide remains lowercase, one word, in text (no hyphen), except in a headline or title.

> *The College opened in September 1946.*
> *The president will send a collegewide memo.*

College-Level Examination Program, CLEP

Combat2College

comma In text, use a serial comma (Oxford comma) between the last item in a list (three or more items), before "and" or "or."

> *A, B, and C*

> **Wrong**: *Students, faculty and staff*

Community Engagement, Office of

Community Engagement Center

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compound adjectives When a compound modifier—two or more words that express a single concept—precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *-ly*. In titles: Generally, capitalize both parts of the compound in titles or headlines. Do not capitalize articles, prepositions, or coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor). In text: When a compound modifier starts a sentence, only the first word in the compound is capitalized.

> *Medium-Sized T-shirts*
>
> *A Two-Thirds Reduction*
>
> *Anti-intellectual Activities* (exception because the first element is merely a prefix or combining form that could not stand by itself as a word (*anti, pre,* etc.)

compose/comprise/constitute Compose means to create or put together. Comprise means to contain, to include all (*not* comprised of). Constitute means form or make up.

> **Right**: *A zoo comprises mammals, reptiles, and birds.*
>
> **Right**: *Montgomery College is composed of students, faculty, and staff at three campuses.*
>
> **Right**: *A collection of professors constitute the faculty.*
>
> **Wrong**: *The committee is comprised of faculty, students, and staff.*

congressman/congresswoman Use only in reference to members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Use Representative or Senator followed by a last name (when applicable) as an introduction.

> *Congressman Jamie Raskin or Rep. Raskin (D-Md.);*
>
> *U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen Jr. (D); U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (Maryland senators)*
>
> *The Honorable Larry Hogan (Maryland governor)*

Cooperative Education and Internship Program (Co-Op)

corequisite (per Webster's 11th)

co-sponsor

councilmember, council member The Montgomery County Council uses the term councilmember (one word, and not councilman or councilwoman). In general, follow the style that the organization uses, and if it is not indicated use council member (two words). In the case of the Montgomery County Council:

> *The announcement was made by Councilmember Craig Rice.*
>
> *The announcement was made by Craig Rice, council member.*

countywide (no hyphen)

coursework

Cultural Arts Center, CAC, (CU)

currency (*See* numbers)

curricula Use lower case, except in a heading or title.

> *The landscape technology program is offered on the Germantown Campus.*
>
> *Many nursing courses have prerequisites.*
>
> **Wrong**: *He is a Theatre major*

dates Avoid use of superscript. For formal invitations, write out numeric date.

> *August 23 or the twenty-third of August*
>
> **Wrong**: *August 23rd*

degree (*See* academic degrees)

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Department of Veterans Affairs, VA

departments Spell out the official department name on first reference. Capitalize both terms when used in combination.

distribution This refers to General Education distribution requirements noted in the College Catalog. Use lower case.

> *behavioral and social sciences distribution*

doctoral degree, doctorate, or Ph.D. (see also abbreviations)

Dual Enrollment (select MCPS students admitted to MC and enrolled in college courses while still attending high school)

Early College Program (MC-MCPS partnership; students can earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree concurrently)

E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence, ELITE (formerly CPOD)

e.g., *exempli gratia* (literally, "for example") In text, always follow with a comma. (*see also,* i.e.)

emerita (feminine)**, emeritae** (plural, feminine)**, emeritus** (masculine)**, emeriti** (plural, masc., or both sexes) an honorary designation, does not simply mean "retired." MC bestows this status on departing members of the community in special recognition of service rendered.

> *the professor emerita*
> *Professor Emeritus Davis, Professors Emeriti Davis and Day, Trustees Emeriti*

English as a Second Language, ESL

English Language for Academic Purposes, ELAP

English to Speakers of Other Languages, ESOL

email (no hyphen) but e-book, e-reader, e-newsletter

Enrollment Services, Office of

equivalent semester hours, ESH

federal Use lower case, except when used in a heading or title.

Federal Direct Loan Program

Federal Pell Grant

Federal Perkins Loan

Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)

fewer/less Use *less* for amounts or mass nouns (e.g., less water). Use *fewer* for countable things (e.g., fewer students, miles, ideas.) Also: use *less* with singular nouns (e.g., less money) and fewer with plural nouns (e.g., fewer dollars).

> *Fewer accidents* (a smaller number) *were reported than was expected. fewer than 60 people*
> *Less effort* (a smaller degree) *was put forth by the organizers, and thus fewer people* (a smaller number) *attended.*
> *less than five years ago*

Fire Science and Emergency Services

First Year Experience (no hyphen)**, FYE**

fractions Spell out amounts less than one in text, using hyphens between the words. Use figures for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals whenever practical.

> *one-third, three-fifths, six-tenths*

Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA

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full-time (adj.) *a full-time worker,* **full time** (adv.) *working full time*

fundraiser, fundraising (n.)

> *We attended the fundraiser for student scholarships.*
> *Fundraising is an Alumni Association effort.*

FY19, FY20 (no spaces) When abbreviating fiscal years, FY00 is correct in official written publications. FY2020 is acceptable only in informal correspondence.

GED, general equivalency diploma

General Education program (official program)**, general education program/requirement** (lowercase, when used as a modifier and not an official program name)

Germantown Innovation Center, GIC

Global Humanities Institute, GHI

Gudelsky Institute for Technical Education, GITE, Homer S. Gudelsky Institute for Technical Education, (GU)

GPA, grade point average, grade points

headlines and subtitles Capitalize the first and last words, all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs (including "is"), adverbs, and subordinate conjunctions. Do not capitalize articles (the, a, an), coordinate conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor), or prepositions (regardless of length)—unless they are the first or last words of the title or subtitle. Use lowercase for the "to" in infinitives.

> *Luncheon Honors, Introduces Scholarship Donors and Recipients*
> *Macklin Business Institute Students Earn Regional Honors in Business Competition*
> *MC Is Ranked Top Engineering Transfer Institution*

health care (not healthcare)

Health Enhancement, Exercise Science, and Physical Education

Health Information Management

Health Sciences Institute

Hispanic Business and Training Institute

Holy Cross Germantown Hospital

The Honorable Spell out when used with "the." Abbreviate to Hon. when it appears without "the." This alternate form of social address may be used for all government officials except cabinet officers.

Honors Program

ID (no periods)

i.e., *id est* ("that is"). Always follow with a comma. (See also, e.g.)

Innovation Fund (formerly Innovation Works)

Inside MC Online

institute (only capitalize when used as a proper noun, e.g., the Macklin Business Institute)

Institute for Part-Time Faculty Engagement and Support

international students on student visas (*also referred to as* F-1/M-1)

Learning Center

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Learning Communities Faculty Fellowship Program

LGBT, LGBTQ (no periods)

Lifelong Learning Institute

locations For generic locations that precede a name or stand alone, use lowercase (when the full campus name is not required). For specific locations, generally use capitalization.

> *cafeteria, bookstore, library, county, commonwealth of Virginia*

M number Montgomery College ID number

Maryland state

> *state of Maryland*
>
> **Wrong:** *State of Maryland*

Macklin Business Institute, MBI, Gordon and Marilyn Macklin Business Institute Honors Program

MATLAB (all caps, not MatLab or Matlab)

MC Campus Store

MC Library, Montgomery College Library, the library, the _____ Campus library (e.g., Germantown Campus library, Rockville Campus library, Takoma Park/ Silver Spring Campus library)

MC logo (For use and images, see montgomerycollege.edu/creativeservices or contact the Office of Communications at communications@montgomerycollege.edu)

MCTV, Montgomery College Television

MDJUCO Athletic Conference, Maryland Junior College Athletic Conference

Media Arts and Technologies

Media Arts Gallery

Middle College Program, MC² (An MC-MCPS partnership where MCPS students can transition into MC coursework at their high school and end their senior year fully on an MC campus.)

Montgomery College, the College

Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Arts Center, The (CF)

multicultural (no hyphen)

MyMC (no space)

New Student Orientation, NSO

NJCAA, National Junior College Athletic Association

noncredit (no hyphen)

numbers (e.g., currency, fractions, phone numbers)
In text, spell out numbers one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above. But, spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence, or recast the sentence. Letters used in ordinal numbers should not appear in superscript. Hyphenate all fractions. Use hyphens (not parentheses) in phone numbers. Ages are always numbers.

> *Two students completed the exam early.*
> *80 percent, 80 percent increase* (no hyphen)
> *one million; about 50 thousand; exactly 50,218*
> *18-year-olds; a 6-year-old girl* (age)

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35mm camera, 16mm film
123rd (not 123rd) (ordinal number)
50th anniversary or fiftieth anniversary
240-567-7000
$5 (not $5.00)*; $1 million*

Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management

Office of Records and Registration

Open Educational Resources (OERs)

off-site (compound modifier), **on-site** (compound modifier)

online

part-time (adj.), **part time** (adv.)

> *part-time student* (adj.)
> *She attends college part time.* (adv.)

party affiliation Include a political figure's party affiliation if the person's actions could reasonably be seen as having an effect on policy or debate, or if readers need it for understanding. But reference to party affiliation is not necessary when a story has no link to politics.

Paul Peck Academic and Innovation Building, (PK)

Paul Peck Humanities Institute

Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society

phone numbers Use hyphens throughout (not parentheses or periods).

> *240-567-5000*

Pinkney Innovation Complex for Science and Technology at Montgomery College (PIC MC) (not PIC-MC)

plays (*see* Quotes, Italics, or Nothing?)

plurals Capital letters used as words, abbreviations that contain no interior periods, and numerals used as nouns form the plural by adding *s*. An apostrophe is never used to form the plural of a family name.

> *masters of arts, bachelors of science*
> *M.A.s and Ph.D.s, URLs (abbreviation with no interior periods)*
> *Afghans and Pakistanis*
> *the Joneses*
> *threes and fours (no apostrophe needed)*
> *thank-yous, dos and don'ts*
> *ifs, ands, or buts, maybes, the three Rs*
> *the 1900s (numeral used as a noun)*

poems (*see also*, Quotes, Italics, or Nothing?) Enclose poem titles (short, not epic) in quotation marks, roman type. For long poetic works, use italics.

> *"Casey at the Bat"* (short, roman)
> *Paradise Lost* (long, italics)

Policies and Procedures These are the official College policies, available online at montgomerycollege.edu/policies-and-procedures. P&P is acceptable in informal written correspondence.

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possessives Add an apostrophe and an *s* to most singular nouns to form the possessive, and only an apostrophe for plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals that do not end in *s*).

> *The Rockville Campus' buildings* (singular proper noun ending in *s*)
> *the campus's parking garages* (common singular noun ending in *s*)
> *The Williamses' new house*
> *FDR's legacy, 2010's heaviest snowstorm*
> *the United States' mission*

postsecondary

prefixes Do not hyphenate prefixes, generally, but:

- hyphenate when the adjacent letters are duplicated, or
- the prefix stands alone, and
- when necessary to avoid confusion with other words.

When in doubt, it is never wrong to keep a hyphen to avoid misleading or puzzling forms (e.g., *re-cover* versus *recover, un-ionized* versus *unionized*).

> *semi-independent, non-native, anti-intellectual*

> **Note**: When the second element consists of more than one word, use an en dash, not a hyphen:
> > *pre–World War I*

preregistration (no hyphen)

prerequisite (no hyphen)

president of the College, College president In text, use lowercase president when the phrase follows the president's name—but capitalize when the title directly precedes the name.

> *Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, president, introduced the keynote speaker.*
> *Montgomery College President Jermaine F. Williams spoke at the conference.*

Raptor (mascot)**, Montgomery C. Raptor, Monty**

Raptors (athletic teams)

Records and Registration Office

Renaissance Scholars Honors Program

readmission (no hyphen)

reentry (no hyphen; this is an exception to the guidance for other prefixes.)

Ride On Bus

Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center (PA)

RSVP (no periods; omit "please." Please is inherent in the literal translation.)

Scholars Circle, The

School of Art and Design, occasionally School of Art + Design (SA + D) when name is used as a logo.

seasons The four seasons are lowercased.

Smithsonian Institution (not Institute)

South Campus Instruction Building

Southern Management Leadership Program (formerly the Hillman Entrepreneurs Program)

start-up (noun and adjective) a fledgling business enterprise

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state names Capitalize state names, but lowercase state if it precedes the proper noun. In running text, AP style prefers state names always be spelled out when standing alone. In lists and mailing addresses, state abbreviations are preferred.

state abbreviations
(postal code abbreviations in parentheses)

Ala. (AL)	Kan. (KS)	Nev. (NV)	S.C. (SC)
Ariz. (AZ)	Ky. (KY)	N.H. (NH)	S.D. (SD)
Ark. (AR)	La. (LA)	N.J. (NJ)	Tenn. (TN)
Calif. (CA)	Md. (MD)	N.M. (NM)	Vt. (VT)
Colo. (CO)	Mass. (MA)	N.Y. (NY)	Va. (VA)
Conn. (CT)	Mich. (MI)	N.C. (NC)	Wash. (WA)
Del. (DE)	Minn. (MN)	N.D. (ND)	W. Va. (WV)
Fla. (FL)	Miss. (MS)	Okla. (OK)	Wis. (WI)
Ga. (GA)	Mo. (MO)	Ore. (OR)	Wyo. (WY)
Ill. (IL)	Mont. (MT)	Pa. (PA)	
Ind. (IN)	Neb. (NE)	R.I. (RI)	

Eight states that are not abbreviated in text: Alaska (AK), Hawaii (HI), Idaho (ID), Iowa (IA), Maine (ME), Ohio (OH), Texas (TX), Utah (UT)

Use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations only with full addresses, including the ZIP code.

Place one comma between the city and the state name, and another coma after the state name, unless ending a sentence.

> *He was traveling from Johnson City, Tennessee, to Katy, Texas, en route to his home in Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

statewide (no hyphen)

Student Affairs Division

Student Code of Conduct, the code

Student Insider's Guide

student with learning disabilities (*not* learning disabled student)

Study Abroad and International Education Program, STBR

summer session (not summer term)

superscript Do not use superscripts for letters in ordinal numbers (e.g., 122nd *not* 122nd).

Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus

that (restrictive, use without commas) (versus, which)

> *Snow that falls in the early spring is rare. (see also*, which)

theater Use this spelling unless the proper name is Theatre (e.g., Black Box Theatre).

they/them/their In cases of gender-neutral pronoun use, the College follows AP Style, excerpted here.

> AP: "In most cases, a plural noun should agree in number with the antecedent: *The children love the books their uncle gave them. They/them/there* is acceptable in limited cases as a singular and/or gender-neutral pronoun, when alternative wording is overly awkward or clumsy. However, rewording usually is possible and always preferable. Clarity is a top priority; gender-neutral use of a singular they is unfamiliar to many readers. We do not use other gender-neutral pronouns such as *xe* or *ze*. … In stories about people who identify as

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neither male nor female or ask not to be referred to as *he/she/him/her:* use the person's name in place of a pronoun, or otherwise reword the sentence, whenever possible. If *they/them/their* use is essential, explain in the text that the person prefers a gender-neutral pronoun. Be sure that the phrasing does not imply more than one person. … When *they* is used in the singular, it takes a plural verb: *Taylor said they need a new car.* Do not use *themself*.

time a.m. and p.m. (with periods) with one space between the numeral and the abbreviation. Use an en-dash for time ranges (not a dash); in text, use "from" and "to," instead of dashes.

> *2 p.m., 3–5 p.m., 9 a.m.–noon* (not 12 p.m. or 12 noon)
> *9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.*
> *Office hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.*

title, professional Capitalize a person's professional title when it precedes the name; use lowercase when it follows the name, regardless of rank or executive level.

> *Montgomery College President Jermaine F. Williams will be the keynote speaker.*
> *President and CEO John Smith will attend the conference.*
> *Jermaine F. Williams, president, will visit the campus on Tuesday.*

> **Exception**: *In promotional or other formal contexts (e.g., a displayed list of donors in an annual report or honored guests at commencement), titles can be capitalized when following a personal name.*

toward (preferable in American English, not towards, the British English preference). The simpler form (without *s*) is also preferred for other direction terms: upward, downward, forward, backward, and afterward.

transfer, transferred, transferring, but **transferable**

TV channels and broadcast networks Set broadcast networks and TV channels in roman type:

> the Discovery Channel, MCTV Channel 10, WAMU

United States, U.S. When used as a noun, spell out; when used as an adjective, abbreviate U.S.

University of Maryland (*excerpted from* brand.umd.edu)
The full, formal name is University of Maryland, College Park (note the comma). In most cases, use simply the University of Maryland. On subsequent references, use Maryland, UMD, or the university, or Terrapins or Terps in athletic references. Prohibited: U-MD, UM, and U of M.

University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) Proper first reference for the university followed by (UMB) if UMB is used in second reference. School names are preceded by University of Maryland without Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Medicine. umaryland.edu/cpa/toolbox/print-style-guide/

University of Maryland, Baltimore County, UMBC

University of Maryland Global Campus, UMGC

Universities at Shady Grove, The, USG "The" is now part of the official name. Use the capital "T" when The Universities at Shady Grove is in a headline or the start of a sentence. Use lowercase "t" when the name appears within a body of text.

University System of Maryland (first reference) On subsequent references, either **University System**, **USM**, or **the System**. (Note: "The" is not part of the official name.) See also usmd.edu/newsroom/style/.

veterans affairs see Combat2College

veterans benefits (no apostrophe)

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vice president and provost (see also, president)

visa (passport endorsement), **VISA** (credit card trademark)

Visual, Performing, and Media Arts

Washington, D.C. (*For additional examples of state abbreviations, see* state names)

web address (two words) Note: http://, https://, and www. are no longer used— or necessary.

web, webpage, website (one word, lowercase)

website, URLs, and email addresses (formatting) Set websites in roman. With Internet addresses (URLs), no space follows the period (also known as a dot). If it is necessary to break a URL or an email address at the end of a printed line, the period should appear on the new line, never at the end of the line above. No hyphen should be added to denote a line break. The break should be made between elements, after a colon, a slash (/), or the symbol @ but before a period or any other punctuation or symbols. To avoid confusion, a URL that contains a hyphen should never be broken at the hyphen.

> *maryland.gov/pages/education.*
> *aspx?view=AdultLearning*
> *montgomerycollege.edu/counseling-and-advising/*
> *first-year-experience/*
> *montgomerycollege.edu/*
> *workforce-development-continuing-education/*

For more guidance on web terms and usage, refer to the Montgomery College web style guide: montgomerycollege.edu/_documents/_training/mc-web-style-guide.pdf.

who/whom *Who* is the pronoun used for reference to human beings and to an animal with a name. Write *the person who is in charge, not the person that is in charge*. *Who* is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause, or phrase: *The students who attend the lecture must sign in to receive extra credit.*

Whom is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: *The professor to whom the students were handing their essays nodded as they filed past*.

which (nonrestrictive) Use which with commas.

> *Snow, which normally falls in the winter, is pretty at first.*
> (*see also*, that)

Wi-Fi

Women's and Gender Studies Program, WGSP

workforce

Workforce Development and Continuing Education, WDCE

Writing, Reading, and Language Center, WRL Center

Capitalization Guide

academic courses Capitalize specific titles of Montgomery College courses, but lowercase general programs of study.

> *Principles of Accounting, ACCT 201*

> **Wrong**: *She is an Accounting major.*

academic degrees Capitalize the abbreviation and omit the word "degree" or spell out using lowercase.

> *A.A., A.A.S., A.S., or associate's degree, associate of applied science, associate of science*
> *B.A., B.S., or bachelor's degree, bachelor's*
> *M.A., M.S., or master of arts, master of science, master's degree, master's*
> *M.B.A., M.F.A., or master of business administration, master of fine arts*
> *Ed.D., Ph.D., or doctoral degree, doctorate*
> *Professor Smith has a Ph.D. in history.*

> **Wrong**: *He also has a B.A. degree in philosophy.*

> **Plural**: *bachelors of science, masters of arts, M.A.s, and Ph.D.s*

> **Exception**: Periods in degrees are not used in MC website copy.

academic subjects Use lower case for an academic subject unless it is the name of a language.

> *He took biology and English.*

academic titles When including an academic degree or credential with a person's name, omit the courtesy title (also called social title) in the same reference.

> *Nawal Benmouna, Ph.D.*
> *Jermaine F. Williams, Ed.D.*

board, campus, center, department, foundation, institute, office, program Only capitalize any of these nouns when they are part of a proper name or specific entity.

> *Montgomery College Board of Trustees, Alumni Association Board of Governors*
> *The board will consider the proposal at the next meeting.*
> *Artwalk takes place at the Rockville Campus each spring.*
> *Students at all three campuses ride the shuttle for free.*
> *the Learning Center, the center* (on second reference)
> *Art Department, the department* (on second reference)
> *the Montgomery College Foundation; The foundation will meet in November.*
> *The Macklin Business Institute; The institute will accept applications in February for the fall semester.*
> *the Honors Program, but the radiologic technology program*

> **Wrong**: *The Board met to discuss the MC 2025 plan.*

> **Wrong**: *Dr. Williams lauded the Foundation for a successful scholarship event.*

certificate Use lowercase for generic references.

> *He received a certificate in technical writing.*

College, collegewide Capitalize "college" only when referring to Montgomery College. This is an exception to the rule on using lowercase for second and other subsequent references. The term collegewide remains lowercase (no hyphen), except in a headline or title.

> *The College opened in September 1946.*
> *The president will send a collegewide memo.*

Capitalization Guide

compounds (in titles) Generally, capitalize both parts of the compound in titles or headlines. Do not capitalize articles, prepositions, or coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor).

Medium-Sized T-shirts

Setting Up Your Email Account

A Two-Thirds Reduction

Anti-intellectual Activities (exception because the first element is merely a prefix or combining form that could not stand by itself as a word (*anti, pre,* etc.)

distribution Use lowercase.

behavioral and social sciences distribution

federal Use lowercase, except when used in a heading or title.

federal government, but Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loan Program

headlines and subtitles Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Capitalize articles (the, a, an) or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title. Use lowercase for the infinitive "to."

Setting Up Your Email Account

College Gets More than $1 Million Grant for Cybersecurity

Luncheon Honors, Introduces Scholarship Donors and Recipients

locations For generic locations that precede a name or stand alone, use lowercase (when the full campus name is not required). For specific locations, generally use capitalization.

cafeteria, bookstore, library, county, commonwealth of Virginia

Maryland State, state of Maryland

Wrong: *State of Maryland*

professional titles Capitalize a person's professional title when it precedes the name; use lowercase when it follows the name, regardless of rank or executive level.

Montgomery College President Jermaine F. Williams will be the keynote speaker.

President and CEO John Smith will attend the conference.

Jermaine F. Williams, president, will visit the campus on Tuesday.

Wrong: *Montgomery College President Dr. Jermaine F. Williams*

Exception: *In promotional or other formal contexts (e.g., a displayed list of donors in an annual report or honored guests at commencement), titles are usually capitalized when following a personal name.*

state names Capitalize state names, but lowercase "state" if it precedes the proper noun.

commonwealth of Virginia, state of Maryland, Maryland state

Wrong: *State of Maryland*

Punctuation Guide

acronyms Generally, omit periods in acronyms unless the result would spell an unrelated word.

ampersand (&) Use the ampersand when it is part of a company's formal name. The ampersand should not be used in place of *and*. In MC unit names, *and* is standard.

apostrophe (') Add an apostrophe and an s to most singular nouns to form the possessive, and only an apostrophe for plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals that no not end in s). If the noun ends in s, x, or z add an apostrophe and an s.

An apostrophe is never used to form the plural.

It is used to avoid confusion in plural nouns that are lowercased or are abbreviations.

> *The Rockville Campus' building* (singular proper noun ending in s)
>
> *the Williamses' new house,* but *the Joneses* (forming a plural, no apostrophe needed)
>
> *2010's heaviest snowstorm*
>
> *the three Rs, the 1900s, threes and fours* (forming a plural, no apostrophe needed)

straight versus slanted apostrophes and quotation marks
For printed material, the typographer's mark ("smart quotes") is preferable to the straight one, which is more prevalent in Internet material and other software applications. MS Word automatically generates the preferred quotation mark.

artwork (*see also*, Quotes, Italics, or Nothing?)
Italicize titles of paintings, drawings, and sculptures.

> Grant Wood's *American Gothic;* Rodin's *Thinker*

books and periodicals (*see also*, Quotes, Italics, or Nothing?)
Italicize titles of books and periodicals.

> *For Whom the Bell Tolls, Newsweek, The Washington Post*

bullet points In bulleted lists, introduce the list with a short phrase or sentence, followed by a colon. Put a space between the bullet and the first word of each item in the list. Capitalize the first word following the bullet. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each section, whether it is a full sentence or phrase. In a short list of items, do not punctuate each item. Use parallel construction for each item in a list.

> *The MC website now contains resource pages in six different languages identified as most common among the MC student population:*
> - *Amharic*
> - *Chinese*
> - *French*
> - *Korean*
> - *Spanish*
> - *Vietnamese*
>
> *The pages contain information about admissions and registration, financial aid, English as a second language classes, transfer credit information, and more.*
>
> *When encouraging students to enroll in French courses, MC faculty cite compelling data:*
> - *French is spoken in more than 50 countries around the world.*
> - *It is the third most widely spoken foreign language.*
> - *French and English are the two official working languages for international government organizations, such as the International Red Cross, the UN Secretariat, and the International Olympic Committee.*

Punctuation Guide

campus's (singular common noun ending in *s*), **campuses'** (plural noun ending in *s*)

commas

> **in city and state names:** Enclose the state, province, and territory in commas to set it off from the rest of the sentence.
>
> > *The committee will meet at the Rockville, Maryland, location.*
>
> **in dates:** In text, insert commas after the date and the year.
>
> > *He was born on July 11, 1955, in Eugene, Oregon.*
> > *The event will be held on July 11, 2019.* (not 11th or 11th)
>
> **in names:** "Jr." is no longer set off by commas; neither is a numeral suffix.
>
> > *Alan Miller Jr. works at the College; but Henry James II does not.*
>
> **in numbers:** Insert a comma in numbers of more than three digits.
>
> > *1,000; $2,580*
>
> **in series:** In lists of three or more items, use a comma before the word "and" and "or."
>
> > *They will serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner.*

dash (and hyphen) In typesetting, three distinct symbols are used: hyphen (-), dash (–) also called an en dash, and em dash (—).

- **hyphen:** Use a hyphen in phone numbers and all fractions.

  > *240-567-7000*
  > *one-third, three-fifths*

- **en dash:** Use an en dash (half the size of an em dash) to indicate a range. (No spaces on either side of the en dash.)

  > *1992–1993*
  > *pages 12–105*
  > *10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.*
  > *Monday–Friday*

- **em dash:** Use an em dash (made up of two hyphens) or parentheses to set off a full phrase when the phrase contains a series of words that must be separated by commas. Also, use an em dash to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause.

  > *We will fly to San Diego in June—if the travel expense is approved.*

exclamation point Use only to express a high degree of surprise, incredulity, or other strong emotion. Avoid overuse; use a comma after mild interjections. End mildly exclamatory sentences with a period.

> *"Never!" she shouted.*
> *We hope you will attend.*
> *The gala was a great success.*
> *Thank you for participating.*

italics For titles of **movies**, **television**, **radio programs**, **plays**, **art** (paintings, drawings, sculptures), **exhibitions, books,** and **periodicals,** use italics. For a complete list, see Quotes, Italics, or Nothing.

> *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (movie)
> *The Sopranos* (TV)
> *WAMU's Drive Time* (radio program)
> *Sweeney Todd* (play)

Punctuation Guide

Rodin's *Thinker and* Grant Wood's *American Gothic* (art)

A Farewell to Arms (book)

The Washington Post, Newsweek (periodical)

pre Do not hyphenate words beginning with *pre*, except: *pre-dentistry, pre-engineering, pre-medicine, pre-medical technology, pre-optometry, pre-pharmacy,* and similar words.

prefixes Generally, do not hyphenate prefixes when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant. Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel, except for cooperate and coordinate.

semi-independent, ultra- and subsonic vibrations

non-native, anti-intellectual

Note: Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized: *pre-World War I.*

Exceptions: pre-election   pre-empt   pre-exist

pre-eminent   pre-establish

For more guidance, follow *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*. AP Stylebook's editors rely on Merriam-Webster's digital content, which is more up to date than the print Merriam-Webster Collegiate. merriam-webster.com (online)

Boilerplate and College Logo

The following statements should be included (as appropriate) in official printed brochures, notices for events at the College, course schedules, the College catalog, and other official College communications.

Title	Statement
ADA	Under provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, this material is available in alternative formats by contacting [insert sponsoring department's name and phone number]. (See also Disability Support Services (DSS)—general use, below)
Board of Trustees (BOT)	See current list online at the Board of Trustees webpage.
College Logo	Refer to guidelines for use, described in the *Montgomery College Brand Standards and Usage Guide*, available online at montgomerycollege.edu/creativeservices.
Disability Support Services (DSS)— general use	Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services as close to admission to the College as possible for accommodations and support services. To ensure timely services, students are encouraged to provide at least a two-week notice as some accommodations are time sensitive. Germantown 240-567-7770 Rockville 240-567-5058 Takoma Park/Silver Spring 240-567-1480
Disability Support Services— for events	To request accommodations, please email accessibility@montgomerycollege.edu or call 240-567-5412 at least two weeks in advance of the event.

Boilerplate and College Logo

Title	Statement
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)—standard	a. Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to promoting equal opportunity and fostering diversity among its student body, faculty, and staff. b. Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to equal opportunity and diversity of its students, faculty, and staff.
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)—limited spacing	Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to equal opportunity.
Mission/Vision/Values	OUR MISSION Montgomery College is where students discover their passions and unlock their potential to transform lives, enrich the community, and change the world. OUR VISION Montgomery College will serve as the community's institution of choice to transform the lives of students and Montgomery County. OUR VALUES Equity and Inclusion, Excellence, Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Adaptability, Sustainability (Adopted by the Board of Trustees on July 1, 2023) (Available online at montgomerycollege.edu/mission)
Tobacco Free	All tobacco products, including traditional cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarettes or vapes are prohibited from Montgomery College property, including its three campuses at Germantown, Rockville, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring, and its central administration building in Rockville. Use of both traditional and e-cigarettes or vapes is not permitted on any MC property, including buildings, walkways, recreation and athletic areas, building entrances, and parking lots.

Editorial Marks

Proofreading Symbols

Symbol	Description
⊙	Insert period
⋏	Insert comma
:	Insert colon
;	Insert semicolon
?	Insert question mark
!	Insert exclamation mark
=/	Insert hyphen
⌄	Insert apostrophe
⌄⌄ ⌄	Insert quotation marks
⊦/N	Insert 1-en dash
⊦/M	Insert 1-em dash
#	Insert space
∨	Superior
∧	Inferior
(/)	Parentheses
[/]	Brackets
▢	Indent 1 em
▢▢	Indent 2 ems
⌗	Paragraph
no ⌗	No paragraph
tr	Transpose—used in margin

Symbol	Description
∼	Transpose—used in text
sp	Spell out
ital	Italic—used in margin
—	Italic—used in text
b.f.	Boldface—used in margin
∿	Boldface—used in text
s.c.	Small caps—used in margin
=	Small caps—used in text
rom.	Roman type
caps	Caps—used in margin
≡	Caps—used in text
c+sc	Caps and small caps—used in margin
≡	Caps and small caps—used in text
l.c.	Lowercase—used in margin
/	Indicates deletion or substitution
ℓ	Delete
ℬ	Delete and close up
w.f.	Wrong font
⌒	Close up
⊐	Move right
⊏	Move left

Symbol	Description
⊓	Move up
⊔	Move down
‖	Align vertically
=	Align horizontally
⊐⊏	Center horizontally
⊨	Center vertically
eq.#	Equalize space—used in margin
√√√	Equalize space—used in text
· · · · · ·	Let it stand—used in margin
stet.	Let it stand—used in text
⊗	Letter(s) not clear
runover	Carry over to next line
runback	Carry back to preceeding line
out, see copy	Something omitted
ℐ/?	Question to author to delete
∧	Caret—used to mark position of error