



MOUNT ST. JOSEPH
UNIVERSITY

Style Guide

Mount St. Joseph University Style Guide

Introduction

The Mount St. Joseph University Style Guide was created to promote consistency and professionalism across all university communications (print and digital, external and internal). As a general best practice, this guide follows the standards put forth in *The Associated Press Stylebook* though we have also included usage rules that are unique to the Mount. The style guide is maintained by the Office of Marketing and Communications and is updated regularly. If you have questions, comments or suggestions, please contact Kathleen Cardwell at 513-244-4330 or kathleen.cardwell@msj.edu.

abbreviations

Spell out on first reference and include abbreviation in parentheses. Use periods with abbreviations for academic and professional degrees. Use the abbreviation on secondary references.

- The Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) is perfect for career-minded business students. The M.B.A. program prepares students with the knowledge, skills and abilities to be business professionals.

When abbreviations for academic and professional degrees appear after a name, use periods with the abbreviations. Only include academic and professional degrees as abbreviations on first reference. This style rule also applies to business cards and in listings, i.e., class notes for alumni, etc.

- Jim Smith, M.B.A., will address the marketing class with a presentation about strategies for direct mail. His presentation included a video.

See also **credentials**, **names** and **titles**.

academic courses

Capitalize official course titles. Use lowercase for general references unless the course is a language.

- This fall, I'm taking Foundation of Visual Thinking.
- Next spring, I'm taking a biology class.
- I'm taking English and Spanish courses next semester.

academic degrees

Capitalize when referring to the proper name of a degree and lowercase on informal references. Certifications are always lowercased.

- She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing.
- She earned a bachelor's degree.
- He earned a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.).

- He earned a master's degree.
- She earned her associate degree while working full time at the library. (Note: associate is not possessive.)
- You can earn an Associate in Arts degree in the School of Arts & Humanities.

See also **abbreviations**.

academic programs

Lowercase academic programs, majors and minors that are not proper names.

- She is an accounting major.
- He is studying English and plans to become a teacher.

Capitalize when part of an official Mount degree, program, or department.

- The Department of Biology offers degrees in biology, biomedical science and neuroscience as well as minors in biology and forensic science.
- The Summer Employment Program celebrated its 10-year anniversary.
- Charles Kroncke is chair of the Department of Business Administration.
- The Talent Opportunity Program allows students to build skills in career planning, professionalism and ethical leadership.

address

Our mailing address is:

Mount St. Joseph University
5701 Delhi Road
Cincinnati, OH 45233-1670

alumni/alumna/alumnus

Please use the following when referring to Mount graduates:

- Alumna for a single female graduate
- Alumnae for plural female graduates
- Alumnus for a single male graduate
- Alumni for plural graduates (either all male or a combination of men and women)

When referring to a class year, use the entire year and capitalize "Class."

- We held a special luncheon for the Class of 1980.

See also **academic degrees**.

ampersand

Ampersands are not used unless they are part of an official name or an accepted abbreviation.

- She works for Johnson & Johnson.
- This course is offered through the School of Arts & Humanities.

Below are official Mount names utilizing an ampersand:

- She earned all-star recognition on the Mount's track & field team.
- Linda works in the Career & Experiential Education Center.
- What majors are available through the School of Arts & Humanities?

athletics

The Mount is a member of the National Collegiate Association of Athletics (NCAA) Division III and a member of the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC). The Lions' website is msjsports.com.

See also **Lions**.

blended

Blended courses refer to classes that combine traditional classroom and online learning.

boilerplate

Use this language for official press releases, media notices, and related materials:

- Mount St. Joseph University is an undergraduate and graduate Catholic university that provides an interdisciplinary liberal arts and professional curriculum emphasizing values, service and social responsibility.

building names and facilities

Please use the following official names:

- Administration Building
- Aquinas Hall
- Archbishop Alter Library
- Career & Experiential Education Center
- Castellini Terrace
- College Theatre
- Computer Learning Center
- Conlan Center
- Dorothy Meyer Ziv Art Building
- Fifth Third Bank Hall

- Health Sciences Center (Neeb Road Facility)
- Jean Patrice Harrington, S.C., Student Center (Harrington Center on second reference)
- Lion's Park
- Mary Schaefer Welcome Center (Admission Office)
- Mater Dei Chapel
- Midland Plaza
- Nursing Learning Lab
- The Pat Habig Learning Center
- Pavilion
- Recital Hall
- Residence Hall
- Rosemary O'Shaughnessy Schmidt Student Affairs Suite
- Schueler Field
- Science Building
- Seton Center
- Seton lobby (lowercase "lobby" as this is not an official name)
- Sports Complex
- Studio San Giuseppe
- Theresa and Richard K. Davis Career Center
- Thrailkill Hall of Student Success

bullets

For long phrases, capitalize the first word following the dash or bullet. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each bullet.

Tim gave the following reasons for choosing his major:

- His parents were also physical therapists.
- He is interested in health and medicine.
- He is looking for a growing career field.

For simple lists, lowercase the first word following the bullet and omit the periods except for the final item.

The Enchanted Garden Summer Camp gives children the chance to play with the following:

- wheelbarrows
- shovels
- sand and water toys
- handicrafts
- rhythm instruments.

calendar items

The sequence for listing calendar items is event, day, date, time and location.

- Open House will take place on Thursday, May 10 at 6 p.m. in the Seton Center Lobby.

child care

Two words. No hyphen.

cities

Use AP abbreviations for state names when following a city preceded by a comma.

- Julie Jones resides in Aspen, Colo., and works as a ski instructor.

Do not list “Ohio” after Cincinnati.

See also **state names**.

classnotes

Use as one word.

class years

Use as two words. Capitalize “Class” when referring to a specific year. Lowercase when referring to multiple years.

- We welcomed the Class of 1981.
- The alumni homecoming honored the classes of 1970, 1980 and 1990.

For alumni (including Mount faculty and staff), list their class years of graduation upon first reference, in chronological order.

- Jane Smith '12 is medical director for Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.
- Bob Jones '90, '92 runs his own company in Kentucky.

classes and course names

See **academic courses**.

coeducation

Written as one word; abbreviated as coed.

College of Mount St. Joseph

This is the former name of Mount St. Joseph University.

See **Mount St. Joseph University**.

commas

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not use a comma before the conjunction (do not use serial commas).

- Sharon, Alison, Jeff, Brian and Jack were nominated.

Do not use commas before “Jr.” or “Sr.” Do not use a comma before “Inc.”

committee

Capitalize the names of committees only when the official name is used. Do not capitalize shortened forms of the committee names.

- She serves on the Presidential Search Committee.
- I am serving on the committee to find our next president.

composition titles

Use italics for titles of books, video games, software titles, movie titles, operas, plays, long poems or a collection of poems, music albums, television programs, newspapers, magazines, journals, reference materials and encyclopedias.

- Nothing beats the original *Star Wars*.
- I read *The Cincinnati Enquirer* every day.
- We watched the theater group’s production of *Hamlet*.

Use quotation marks for titles of papers and presentations, short poems, song titles, articles (in journals, magazines, newspapers or on the web), television or radio episodes, paintings, sculptures and exhibits.

- Professor Roberta Jones presented “The Future of Cellular Biology” at the conference.
- I just heard “American Pie” on the radio.
- My favorite *Twilight Zone* episode is “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet.”

Conferences, events and lectures

Capitalize official conference names, events and lectures. Do not use italics or quotation marks.

- Commencement will be held on May 15.
- This year, the Mount will host its Physical Therapy Lecture Series.

cooperative education

Capitalize the formal title of the Cooperative Education program on first reference.

Use lowercase co-op or cooperative education (when not followed by program) as second reference.

- The Cooperative Education program is housed in the Career & Experiential Education Center.
- Students have the opportunity to gain paid work experience through cooperative education.
- The seniors are co-oping with more than 12 organizations this semester.

Core Curriculum

Written as two words, capitalized. Core can be used on second reference.

corequisite

Written as one word.

course work

Written as two words, no hyphen.

credentials

When listing degrees, certifications and other professional designations, do not use periods after a name. Do use periods in all abbreviations of credentials, including academic and professional degree abbreviations. Also, if possible, list from oldest to most recent. Do not use the abbreviated credentials on secondary references.

- Jackie Cruise, Ph.D., M.B.A., will be the guest lecturer on Tuesday. Cruise will speak until 3 p.m.

See also **abbreviations**.

dashes

Use an em dash with no space between words to show a break or dramatic pause.

- When I opened the classroom door, I suddenly realized—we were about to have a surprise quiz.

Use an en dash to indicate a span of time or when listing scores of athletic games.

- I worked at the Mount during the 1980s-1990s.
- The Lions won 42-30.

dates and times

Use commas to separate the day of the week and date. Also use a comma after the year when continuing the sentence.

- He arrived on Monday, Sept. 3, 2011.
- The twins were born March 19, 1998, to a loving couple.
- She will arrive on Wednesday, Oct. 17.
- We met on Sept. 1, 2012, to discuss the new academic programs.

When indicating time, use lowercase letters and periods. Omit zeroes (“:00”).

- His first class is at 9:30 a.m. The soccer team has a game at 7 p.m.

For 12 a.m. and 12 p.m., you may also use midnight and noon, respectively.

See **months**.

days of the week

Do not abbreviate Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc. Do not abbreviate unless used in tabular format (no periods):

- Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

departments and offices

Capitalize when referring to the official name of a school, department or office.

- The School of Business will host the event.
- The Office of Student Administrative Services provides financial aid support to students.

doctorate

Use either “doctorate” or “doctoral degree.” Do not use “doctorate degree.”

- She earned her doctorate in less than two years.

See also **academic degrees**.

email

Written without hyphen, not capitalized. Hyphenate e-newsletter, e-commerce, e-book, and similar words.

exclamation points

Use sparingly and only once at the end of a sentence.

- Yes: Finally, I know all about exclamation points!
- No: I can’t believe what they said about exclamation points!!!

extracurricular

Written as one word, no hyphen.

face-to-face

Refers to a course delivery format in which courses are held in a classroom with regularly scheduled sessions throughout the semester.

fieldwork

Written as one word.

freshman/freshmen

Written as one word. When referring to a specific graduation year, capitalize “Class.”

- Last fall, the Mount welcomed freshmen students who will be the Class of 2019.

See also **class years**.

full time/part time

Written as two words when used as an adverb. Hyphenate when used as an adjective.

- Mary is employed full time.
- Bob has a full-time job.

fundraising

Written as one word.

GPA

Short for grade point average. No need to spell out on first reference and no periods required.

Greater Cincinnati

Capitalize “Greater” when defining a community and its surrounding region.

- She lives in the Greater Cincinnati area.

health care

Written as two words. When written as a compound modifier, do not use a hyphen.

- She worked in health care.
- He works in the health care department.

ID

Can be used without periods as a substitute for “identification.”

internet

Use as lowercase. (This is a June 2016 update from the AP Style Guide.)

See also **web**.

intranet

Written in lowercase.

iPad, iPhone

Please write as indicated, beginning with a lowercase “i.”

italics

Use italics for titles of books, video games, software titles, movie titles, operas, plays, long poems or a collection of poems, music albums, television programs, newspapers, magazines, journals, reference materials and encyclopedias.

See also **composition titles**.

job titles

See **titles**.

Liberal Arts and Sciences (LA&S)

LA&S can be used on second reference.

life cycle

Written without a hyphen.

life span

Written as two words.

Lions

This is the official name for all Mount NCAA sports teams. When using “Lions,” follow plural noun rules:

- The Lions won their third tournament.
- The Lions’ coaching staff was recognized by ESPN last week.

The Lions’ website is msjsports.com.

See also **athletics**.

long-term, long term

Written with a hyphen when used as a compound modifier.

- She is planning to pursue a career in long-term care.
- T is planning for the long term.

majors

See **academic programs**.

midterm

Written as one word.

months

Abbreviate when used with a specific day. Spell out when used without a date.

- I was born on Jan. 27.
- I was born in January.

Only abbreviate: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Always spell out completely: March, April, May, June and July.

Mount News

Mount News is the official alumni and institutional publication for Mount St. Joseph University. Please contact Kathleen Cardwell, director of marketing and communications, at kathleen.cardwell@msj.edu to submit story ideas for consideration. Alumni may also contact Gina Bath, associate director of alumni relations, to submit story ideas and classnotes.

Mount St. Joseph University

This is the official name of our institution. On second reference, use “the Mount” or the “University.”

“Mount” is never abbreviated. “St.” is always abbreviated. “Mount St. Joe,” and “Mount St. Joseph” are not acceptable in written or audio communications. The use of “MSJ” in written or audio communications is only acceptable if used with “Lions” to represent Mount athletics.

See **University**.

multi-age

Written with a hyphen.

multicultural

Written as one word.

multi-dimensional

Written with a hyphen.

names

On first reference, use first and last name. For secondary references, use last name.

- Jill White is studying marketing. White is expected to graduate in 2017.

An exception can be made in cases where content is sensitive and using a first name is more appropriate on secondary references. Also, first names are acceptable when discussing two people who share the same last name (such as siblings or spouses).

nonprofit

Written as one word.

Northern Kentucky

Capitalize directional words when they designate regions.

- She is from Northern Kentucky.

numerals

Spell out zero through nine, use numerals for 10 and above. Spell out numbers if they are the first word in a sentence. An exception to this is when a calendar year begins a sentence.

- She has four or five classes this semester.
- I am taking 15 credits this fall.
- Fifteen students showed up at the meeting.
- 1957 was a fabulous year.

Use numerals when describing currency, figures, heights, widths, and other dimensions.

- She borrowed \$25.
- He is 5 feet, 10 inches tall.
- Last January, we had 9 inches of snow.
- The closet is 4 feet wide and 5 feet long.

Use numerals for ages of people and percentages.

- She is 7 years old.

- I scored 90 percent on the exam.

off-site

Written with a hyphen; use to reference facilities not located on main campus.

offices

See **departments and offices**.

on-campus

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. Use as two words in other situations.

- The on-campus parking is limited.
- The quad is easy to find once you're on campus.

online

Written as one word.

percent

Spell out with numerals. Use symbol (%) in diagrams, charts, etc.

- We're about 75 percent done.

period

Only one space should follow the period at the end of a sentence.

photo captions

When identifying multiple people in a photo caption, list from left to right and include full names.

- Pictured are (from left): Joe Smith, Peggy Jones and Sarah Jones.

Plus One Credit Option

Capitalize when referring to service learning and course work.

pre-kindergarten/pre-K

Use "pre-kindergarten" on first reference and "pre-K" on secondary references.

Pre-Kindergarten Special Needs Endorsement

Capitalize when used as a proper noun. You may use "Pre-K" if needed.

- I am earning the Pre-K Special Needs Endorsement at the Mount.

prerequisite

Written as one word.

president

As per the titles entry, capitalize when placed before a name but lowercase when placed after or used in general terms.

- President H. James Williams, Ph.D., asked students if they had any questions.
- The lecture was delivered by H. James Williams, Ph.D., president of Mount St. Joseph University.

Specific usage for the current president, H. James Williams, and his wife, is as follows:

- Correct name usage: H. James Williams
- Correct name usage: Carole C. Williams
- Plural: The Williamses are expected to arrive at the event by 6:30 p.m.
- Singular possessive: Dr. Williams' speech during orientation received a hearty round of applause.
- Plural possessive: The Williamses' house was located in a suburb of Nashville, Tenn.

programs and majors

See **academic programs**.

quotation marks

Use quotation marks for titles of papers, short poems, song titles, articles (in journals, magazines, newspapers, or on the web), television or radio episodes, paintings, presentations, sculptures and exhibits.

See also **composition titles**.

Periods and commas always go within quotation marks. Other punctuation such as question marks, semicolons and exclamation points are placed within quotations marks only if they are part of the quote.

- Mary asked, "When is the final exam?"
- "He stopped by after class," Anne said.
- Why did Ellen say, "I should've studied more"?

Use single quotation marks when using quotes within quotes.

- Kelly answered, "She said, 'I have to take this class again.' "

religious titles

As a general rule, use "Sister" or other religious title on first reference before a person's full name on first reference. For secondary references, use "Sr." and the first name.

- Sister Sally Duffy, SC, will be joining us for lunch.
- Sr. Sally looks forward to seeing you again.

See also **Sisters of Charity**.

SC Ministry Foundation

Use formal name in all references. Do not use “Ministry,” “Foundation” or “SCMF.”

See also **Sisters of Charity**.

school names

Please use these as the official Mount school names:

- School of Arts & Humanities
- School of Behavioral and Natural Sciences
- School of Business
- School of Education
- School of Health Sciences

seasons/semesters

Lowercase the seasons of the year and semesters.

- Classes start in the fall semester.
- The Conlan Center offers summer hours for registration.

semicolons

These are used to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey. Also use semicolons to separate elements of a series when individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas.

- The chef addressed students, parents and alumni; told them when to expect breakfast, lunch and dinner; and talked about ingredients, the food’s nutritional information and his culinary training.

Semicolons are placed outside of quotation marks.

Sisters of Charity

Spell out the formal name of this organization in all references. Only use “SC” after a person’s name upon first reference (no periods).

- The Sisters of Charity coordinated the event.
- Monica Gundler, SC, helped make the service possible.

smartphone

Written as one word.

Social Media names

Capitalize all references to social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube. Note use of capital “T” in YouTube. Also note that the verb used in reference to Twitter is “tweet” or “tweeted” not “twittered.”

states

Spell out the name of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone in bodies of stories.

- She lives in Kentucky.

Some state names may be condensed to fit typographical requirements when used in lists or charts. Note: The names of eight states are NEVER abbreviated in text: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah.

Following are the state abbreviations to use in text when a city or country precedes the state name. Postal codes used to address mail appear in parentheses.

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

- Joe is attending a convention in Pittsburgh, Pa.
- The Mount is one of many Catholic universities in Ohio.

See **cities**.

telephone numbers

Use hyphens and do not use 1 before the number. Do not use parentheses for area codes.

- The Mount’s phone number is 513-244-4200.

time

See **dates and times**.

titles

Lowercase if the title stands alone or follows a person's name. Uppercase a title before a person's name.

- Kathleen Cardwell, director of marketing and communications, will address our class at 3 p.m.
- Director of Marketing and Communications Kathleen Cardwell will address our class at 3 p.m.

Specify professor, associate professor, assistant professor, adjunct professor, etc., whenever referring to Mount faculty members.

- Associate Professor Kevin Johnson will join us later.
- Today's class will be taught by an adjunct professor.

time frame

Written as two words.

tri-state

Lowercase with a hyphen when referring to the Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana region.

upperclassman/upperclassmen

Always written as one word.

United States

Spell out when used as a noun and abbreviate "U.S." when used as an adjective.

- She came to the United States from Australia.
- He serves in the U.S. Navy.

University

Capitalize when referring to the Mount specifically on second reference. Do not capitalize when used as a common noun.

- The University offers several programs.
- As a university, the Mount offers several programs.

Vision2020

Written as one word with capitalization and no spaces.

web

Use as lowercase. (This is a June 2016 update from the AP Style Guide.) Do not use “World Wide Web.” Do not include “http://www.” when listing websites. Just use “msj.edu” when referring to the Mount’s website.

See also **internet**.

web-enhanced

Hyphenated and refers to courses held in a classroom that include activities delivered through online technology.

webcam, webcast, webmaster, website

Written as one word and lowercased.

web page

Written as two words and lowercased.

Williams, H. James

See **president**.

workplace

Written as one word.

ZIP code

ZIP stands for Zone Improvement Program and is always capitalized. The Mount’s ZIP code is 45233-1670.