

Updated October 2024

University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Writing Style Guide

Use of a writing style guide helps increase the clarity and effectiveness of communications by consistent use of language, spelling and punctuation.

Many organizations create a house style guide that is particular to an institution. This writing style guide is such and serves to promote consistency and accuracy in writing at UW-River Falls. **Anyone writing for print or web on behalf of UW-River Falls should adhere to this guide.**

If no entry is found in this guide, the [AP Stylebook](#) should be considered the reference of choice, followed by the [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#).

Please refer any questions to Kelsea in University Marketing and Communications at 715-425-4422 or kelsea.wissing@uwrf.edu.

“Good style favors short words, short sentences, short paragraphs, short stories.”
That’s what the Instructions for Correspondents of the Associated Press said in 1911. The same is still true today!

Abbreviations, acronyms

Avoid abbreviations or acronyms that readers will not quickly recognize. Do not abbreviate the words professor, agriculture, association or university in text. These words, however, may be abbreviated in a headline. Example: Prof., Assoc.

Spell out all titles on first reference. Examples: Use University of Wisconsin-River Falls on first reference. Use “UW-River Falls” or “UWRF” on second and future references. Use “Biology Professor John Jones” in first reference and use “Jones” on second and future references.

Academic degrees

Avoid using academic abbreviations in text. Example: He holds a Master of Science degree in teaching (not “He holds a M.S.T.”). Exception: “John Jones, Ph.D., is a mathematics professor” is acceptable.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor's and master's only when they are followed by the word "degree." They are lowercase as common nouns. Use "master of " (no "s" when followed by "of").

When writing out degrees for a list of names, always use the full name and set the degree off by a comma. Example: John Jones, B.A., or John Jones, Bachelor of Arts, ...

Avoid using the courtesy title "Dr." except for a physician (M.D.). Use Ph.D. following the name instead.

Academic titles

See Titles.

Acronyms

Include an acronym in parentheses after spelling out the name in first reference. Use the acronym only then in further references. Example: College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), then use just CAS on second reference and beyond.

Addresses

The official address of UW-River Falls is **410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022** (Please note that south is abbreviated, 3rd is not spelled out, and street is also abbreviated.)

Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., and St., only with a numbered address. Example: 410 S. 3rd St.

Spell out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a house number. Example: They live on Cascade Avenue.

Use lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name. Example: Third and Spruce streets.

For addresses only, use these postal state abbreviations:

AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY.

Adviser/Advisor

When referring to academics, use "adviser," not "advisor." Note the "er." Correct: Advisory.

Affect, effect

Affect means to influence and should not be used as a noun (except as a term in psychology to describe an emotion). Example: How will the electrical outage affect campus?

Effect, used as a verb, means to cause “to effect change.” As a noun, it means result. Example: What is the effect of the outage on campus?

Ages

Always use figures. Example: A 2-year-old spotted his mom. His dad is 29 years old. The student, 20, has a brother. The student is in his 20s (no apostrophe).

Note the hyphenation of age as a compound modifier preceding the noun. Example: a 20-year-old student.

Alumna, alumnae, alumnus, alumni

“Alum” is accepted in all references to UWRF grads, no matter what gender. It is preferred over alumnus and alumna. Use “alumni” if referring to more than one person.

“Alumna” is one female. “Alumnae” is more than one female.

“Alumnus” is one male. “Alumni” is a pair or group that contains at least one male.

Use “alumni” when referring to a group of men and women.

American Indians, Native Americans

Both are acceptable terms in general references for those in the U.S. when referring to two or more people of different tribal affiliations. For individuals, use the name of the tribe; if that information is not immediately available, try to obtain it. Some tribes and tribal nations use member; others use citizen. If in doubt, use citizen. Avoid words such as wampum, warpath, powwow, teepee, brave, squaw, etc., which can be disparaging and offensive. “Indian” is used to describe the peoples and cultures of the South Asian nation of India. Do not use the term as a shorthand for American Indians.

Examples: He is a Navajo commissioner. She is a member of the Nisqually Indian Tribe. He is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

A 1990 U.S. law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. ADA is acceptable on second reference. The law defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. It does not specifically name all disabilities that are covered.

Example: The Americans with Disabilities Act allows for those who are wheelchair-bound to request an ADA-compliant entrance.

Annual

An event cannot be described as “annual” until it has been held at least two successive years. Do not use the term “first annual.” Instead, note that sponsors plan to hold the event annually.

Asian American

Acceptable for an American of Asian descent. When possible, refer to a person's country of origin or follow the person's preference. For example: Filipino American or Indian American. Do not describe Pacific Islanders as Asian Americans, Asians or of Asian descent. Avoid using Asian as shorthand for Asian American when possible. Do not use oriental to refer to East Asian nationals and their peoples.

Example: The Asian American community has seen an influx of violent acts since the arrival of coronavirus on U.S. shores.

Black(s), white(s)

Do not use either term as a singular noun. For plurals, phrasing such as Black people, white people, Black teachers, white students is often preferable when clearly relevant. The plural nouns Blacks and whites are most often used in academic writing and data reporting (see example below). Black and white are acceptable as adjectives when relevant.

Use the capitalized term Black as an adjective in a racial, ethnic or cultural sense: Black people, Black culture, Black literature, Black studies, Black colleges.

African American is also acceptable for those in the U.S., although the terms are not necessarily interchangeable. Americans of Caribbean heritage, for example, generally refer to themselves as Caribbean American.

Use Negro or colored only in names of organizations or in rare quotations when essential for historical reference.

Examples: White officers account for 64% of the police force, Black officers 21% and Latino officers 15%. COVID-19 mortality was higher among non-Hispanic Blacks compared with non-Hispanic whites, due to more non-Hispanic Blacks holding essential-worker positions. He helped integrate dance halls among Blacks, whites, Latinos and Asian Americans. The gunman targeted Black churchgoers.

Bookstore

The UWRF bookstore is called the Falcon Shop, located in the University Center.

Brown (adj.)

Avoid this broad and imprecise term in racial, ethnic or cultural references unless as part of a direct quotation. Interpretations of what the term includes vary widely. Use specific racial identities.

Example: The Black, Latino and Indian communities gathered to discuss their annual neighborhood cultural celebration.

Buildings

Use the following names when referring to buildings on campus:

Agricultural Engineering Annex

Agricultural Science

Planetarium

CHILD Center (child care center)

Centennial Science Hall (CSH)

Observatory

Central Heating Plant and Central Chilled Water Plant

Chalmer Davee Library (pronounced da-VEE)

David Rodli Hall (Rodli Hall)

E.H. Kleinpell Fine Arts: (KFA) (do not include “building”)

William W. Abbott Concert Hall

Blanche Davis Theatre

Sanford Syse Theatre (Black Box)

Falcon Center

Food Science Addition

Greenhouse

Hunt Arena at Falcon Center

Karges Gym at Falcon Center

Knowles Field House at Falcon Center (Note: “Field House” is two words)

Maintenance and Central Stores Building

North Hall

Page Arena at Falcon Center

Regional Development Institute (RDI)

SciTech (Science and Technology Innovation Center)

Smith Stadium at Ramer Field

South Hall

Walker D. Wyman Education Building (WEB)

Residence halls

Do not use "dorm." They are “residence halls.”

Crabtree Hall

Grimm Hall

Hathorn Hall

Jesse H. Ames Suites (Ames Suites)

Ann Lydecker Living Learning Center

Johnson Hall

May Hall

McMillan Hall

Parker Hall

Prucha Hall

Stratton Hall

George R. Field South Fork Suites (South Fork Suites)

Other campus buildings

Campus Farm (1475 S. Wasson Lane, River Falls)

Falcon Frontier Days Rodeo Arena

Mann Valley Farm (129 S. Glover Rd., River Falls)

Dairy Learning Center

Melvin Wall Amphitheatre (Wall Amphitheatre) (note the "re")

University Center (UC)

Kinnickinnic Theater ("er" and always spell out "Kinnickinnic")

Brochure titles/captions

The first letter of each word in titles/captions is capitalized. If a section heading is a sentence, punctuation should be used. Example: Explore your scholarship options at UW-River Falls.

Headings are lowercase except for the first word and proper nouns. Example: Resources for undergraduates and recent graduates

Short labels are capitalized. Example: Dining Options

Avoid using all capital letters. Only the first letter of a word should be capitalized, except in proper titles or acronyms.

Call-to-action

Do not use a colon in a call-to-action before the email address or URL. Examples: For more information, email admissions@uwrf.edu. For more information, call 715-425-3778. For more information, go to www.uwrf.edu.

Capitalization

Capitalize proper nouns. Capitalize titles when they precede a name: Director John Doe.

Lowercase a title when it follows a name: John Doe, director of Public Affairs.

Use capitalization sparingly. See AP style and the following UWRF style guide entries: college, department, university names; committees; majors; organizations; titles.

Do not capitalize the names of seasons, academic terms, or descriptive names for days. Examples: fall, second semester, spring semester.

Avoid using all caps. Only the first letter of a word should be capitalized, except in proper titles or acronyms.

Century

Lowercase and spell out numbers less than 10. Examples: the first century, the 20th century.

Chair

Not chairman, chairwoman or chairperson. Just chair. Capitalize “chair” before a name. Example: Faculty Senate Chair Jane Smith. Lowercase “chair” following a name. Example: Jane Smith, chair of the Faculty Senate.

Colleges, departments, university names

Capitalize the formal names of colleges within the university. Example: The Mathematics Department is in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Department names are capitalized: Biology Department, Psychology Department. Do not use "Department of."

Use lowercase college, department, etc., when not used in the formal context. Example: The college held an information fair to promote its programs.

Always lowercase "university" when referring to UW-River Falls as an entity and generically. Example: The university (meaning UW-River Falls) recently built the George R. Field South Fork Suites.

For other campuses in the Universities of Wisconsin use: UW-La Crosse. Note that all UW system campuses with two words have a space between the words: UW-La Crosse, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Eau Claire, UW-Green Bay.

Do not use “UW System.” The name has changed to “Universities of Wisconsin.” Use a hyphen in UW-River Falls, but not in UWRF.

For colleges and universities outside the Universities of Wisconsin, spell out the complete name of the college and follow with the state if not Wisconsin: Wartburg College, Iowa; Gustavus Adolphus, Minn. Second reference: Wartburg, Gustavus Adolphus.

UWRF college names and abbreviations: College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES); College of Arts and Sciences (CAS); College of Education, Business and Allied Health (CEBAH). For the proper name of a department on campus, use the search function on the UWRF main page to find the correct name. Never use “Department of...” or “Office of...” to begin a department or office name. Please use English Department and Registrar’s Office, etc.

UWRF **does not use ampersands**. Especially in department titles – “and” is always spelled out. Example: Music and Stage and Screen Arts Department.

Commas

Do not use serial commas in a list joined by a conjunction: Use "red, white and blue" rather than "red, white, and blue."

Always place commas and periods **inside** quotation marks. Example: "I didn't want to go," the student said.

When a sentence starts with "If" or "For" or contains a "but," it needs a comma somewhere. Example: If you arrive at noon, you will be too early.

Do not use a comma to separate a title and a name if the title is **before** the name. The title only gets commas if it **follows** a name. Example: "It was a cold day," said Admissions Director Joe Smith or "It was a cold day," said Joe Smith, admissions director (lowercase the title when it follows a name).

Committees

Capitalize the full name of a committee. Example: Student Activities Committee.

Lowercase the second references. Example: The committee met yesterday. Capitalize Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Council, and Student Senate as they are proper names.

Commencement

Capitalize in all references.

Composition titles

Use quotation marks around the titles of books, anthologies, songs, movies, plays, operas, television programs, lectures, speeches and works of art. Do not use quotation marks with reference works (example: Encyclopedia Britannica) or around names of magazines, newspapers or professional journals.

Course titles

Academic course titles are capitalized: Sociology of Gender Roles. Course titles are not put in quotes or in italics. Example: She took a course in history; she must take Freshman English and History 101.

Courtesy titles

Do not use Mr., Mrs., Miss, and Ms. Use only the person's first and last name.

Do not use the courtesy title "Dr." with academic degrees. Use: "John Jones, Ph.D." instead of "Dr. John Jones." "Dr." is only used to refer to medical doctors.

Repeat first and last names or use first names only when quoting people with the same last name in a story.

Dash

A dash is two hyphens or preferably one em/long (—) dash with no spaces before or after the previous and following word. Shift + option + hyphen on a Mac.

Use a dash without spaces before/after to offset a phrase. Example: The new addition—\$249 million—will be an asset to students.

Dates

Capitalize the names of months in all uses.

Abbreviate the month (Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.) when used with a day of the month and year. **Do not** use superscripts: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th. Spell out the name of the month when using alone or with a year alone. Examples: September 2014. The wedding was Sept. 3, 2015.

Refer to the day or days of the week for scheduled events within seven days of publication. Example: The concert is Thursday, Oct. 3. The play will run Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 3-6.

Capitalize and **never abbreviate the days of the week**. Example: Thursday, Nov. 3.

When the day of the week is used with the date and year, it needs to be spelled out, but the month is abbreviated if it's a month that is commonly abbreviated. Example: Thursday, Sept. 3, 2015 and Wednesday, April 7. (The day of the week is never abbreviated).

Do not include the year if the date falls within the current year. Include the year for subsequent or previous years. Example: The concert is May 3. The last concert was March 2, 2020. The next concert will be Oct. 4, 2019.

Daylight saving time

Not "savings." No hyphen. Lowercase in all uses. Example: daylight saving time.

Days of the week

See Dates entry.

Degrees

See Academic Degrees entry.

Department

Never abbreviate.

Lowercase whenever "department" stands alone. Example: The department is hiring.
Lowercase in plural uses. Example: The physics and chemistry departments are located on the same floor.

Capitalize department and office names. Example: We toured the Journalism Department, the Athletics Department and the Student Events Office.

Do not use "Department of" or "Office of."

Use only a consistent abbreviation for a department name and only on second reference.
Example: Health and Human Performance Department (HHP), then HHP on second reference.
Use College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) in first reference, then use CAS on second reference.

Directions, regions

Lowercase directional or area descriptions when referring to a section of a state or city.
Examples: He drove west. The cold front was moving east. He was touring western and west-central Florida, then southern Atlanta. UWRF is located in western Wisconsin.

Capitalize regions or specific parts of the country. Example: She was travelling through the Midwest. She has a Southern accent. It will bring showers to the East Coast by morning.

Disabilities

Do not describe an individual as having a disability unless it is clearly pertinent to the story. Be specific about the type of disability, or symptoms. Avoid the term handicap for a disability or handicapped for a person. Avoid using disability-related words lightly or in unrelated situations, such as fell on deaf ears or turned a blind eye.

Examples: Merritt, who is blind and walks with the help of a guide dog, said she is pleased with the city's walkway improvements. **Not:** Zhang, who has paraplegia, is a fan of the Philadelphia Phillies.

The woman said the airline kicked her family off a plane after her 3-year-old, who has autism, refused to wear a mask. She said her son became upset because he does not like to have his face touched.

Dollars

Use "\$2 million" **not** "2 million dollars" or "\$2 million dollars."

Email

Do not use a hyphen in email. The "e" is not capitalized unless it starts a sentence. Use a hyphen with e-terms such as e-book, e-newsletter, e-business, e-commerce.

Emeritus, emeriti

The word **emeritus** is added to formal titles to denote both men and women who have retired and retained their rank or title. When used, place the word emeritus **after** the formal title.

Example: Chancellor Emeritus George Field; Professor Emeritus Barbara Anderson; Sam Morison, professor emeritus of history.

Use **emerita** for similar reference if a woman prefers it.

Emeriti is plural. Example: Emeriti faculty attended the luncheon.

Entitled

Use “entitled” to mean a right to have or do something. Do not use it to mean “titled.”
Correct: She was entitled to the promotion. Correct: The book was titled “Gone With the Wind.”

Ethnicity

Do not mention unless pertinent to the story.

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races, tribes: Arab, Arabic, African, American, etc. Examples include Asian, Native American and Hispanic. Capitalize Black. American Indian is the AP preferred term for Native American.

Every day/everyday

“Every day” is an adverb. Example: I get up at six every day. Substituting “each day” for “every day” will help you remember.

“Everyday” (no space between the words) is an adjective meaning commonplace. Example: Everyday drugs like aspirin; everyday chores like cleaning.

Exclamation points

Use exclamation points sparingly. Never use more than one to end a sentence.

Falcons

Refer to the team with the plural form: Falcons basketball team. Falcon (no “s”) may be used to refer to an individual player.

Be careful in use of possessives and plurals. Example: The Falcons’ home court (not s’s).

Do not use the term “lady Falcons.” Use women’s team, the women, or simply the Falcons.

When using the term “**Falcon family**,” only capitalize “Falcon,” not “family.” Correct: We welcome you to the Falcon family.

Foundation

Proper title: UW-River Falls Foundation Inc.

On second reference do not capitalize “foundation.” Example: The UWRF Foundation Inc. grants scholarship aid to students and awards grants to faculty. The foundation also provides monetary awards to faculty and staff for outstanding service.

Freddy Falcon

The university mascot is Freddy Falcon. (not "Freddie," not "Freddy the Falcon")

Freshman, freshmen

Use "first year student" to refer to a freshman. Freshman is one male or one female. Freshmen is plural.

Gay, lesbian

Used to describe people attracted to the same sex, though lesbian is the more common term for women. Preferred over homosexual. Include sexual orientation only when it is pertinent to a story and avoid references to sexual preference or to a gay or alternative lifestyle. The term gays is acceptable as a plural noun when necessary, but do not use the singular gay as a noun. Lesbian is acceptable as a noun in singular or plural form. Sexual orientation is not synonymous with gender.

Examples: Cheryl came out as a lesbian in college after dating Anna. He has crusaded tirelessly for gay rights.

Gender and sexuality

Gender is not synonymous with sex. Gender refers to a person's social identity, while sex refers to biological characteristics.

Example: Some people believe your gender can only be male or female based on your birth certificate, but others think gender is just a cultural label.

His, her

Do not presume gender pronoun in constructing a sentence but use the pronoun "his" when an indefinite antecedent without gender pronoun may be male or female: firefighter not "fireman," security officer not "policeman." Substitute neutral pronouns for the gender.

Often times, the best choice is to re-word the sentence.

Homecoming

Capitalize in all references to the annual celebration.

Hometowns

Always include a student's hometown as part of the sentence. Example: Mary Smith of Elmwood was granted a \$1,000 scholarship. (No comma before or after "of Elmwood")

Do not use a state following the city name if the city is located in our own state but include the appropriate state abbreviation with cities are located in other states. **If a city is not followed by a state name, it implies that the city is located in Wisconsin.** Refer to the AP Stylebook list of state abbreviations and use when including a hometown in text. **Do not** use postal code

abbreviations within sentences. See “State names” section for reference.

J-Term

J-Term is correct. It has a hyphen and “Term” is capitalized.

Job titles

Job titles are lowercase unless they come right **before** a name. Examples: She is a marketing coordinator at Acme Industries. Marketing Coordinator Jane Smith is sick today.

Laboratory farms

See Farms entry.

Latino, Latina

Latino is often the preferred noun or adjective for a person from, or whose ancestors were from, a Spanish-speaking land or culture or from Latin America. Latina is the feminine form. Some prefer the recently coined gender-neutral term Latinx, which should be confined to quotations, names of organizations or descriptions of individuals who request it and should be accompanied by a short explanation. Hispanics is also generally acceptable for those in the U.S. Use a more specific identification when possible, such as Cuban, Puerto Rican, Brazilian or Mexican American.

Example: Hernandez prefers the gender-neutral term Latinx.

LGBTQ

Acceptable in all references for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning and/or queer. Use of LGBTQ is best as an adjective and an umbrella term. Don't use it, for instance, when the group you're referring to is limited to bisexuals. Queer is an umbrella term covering people who are not heterosexual and is acceptable for people and organizations that use the term to identify themselves. The NLGJA (Association of LGBTQ Journalists) [notes that some organizations](#) add a + sign (as in LGBT+ or LGBTQ+) to ensure all are included.

Example: Walters joined the LGBTQ business association.

Livestream/livestreaming.

One word in all uses. No hyphen.

Majors/minors

A student can major in a program such as art history or be a history major.

Major names are **not** capitalized unless a proper name is involved. Examples: John is a journalism major. His girlfriend is an English major. She is majoring in economics and chemistry. In college, I majored in political science and minored in religious studies.

Meletean

The former UWRF yearbook. Refer to it in quotes, as any book (except works of reference—see AP guide).

Mental illness

Mental illness is a general term. Specific conditions are disorders and should be used whenever possible. Avoid descriptions that connote pity, such as afflicted with, suffers from, victim of, battling and demons. Avoid terms such as the mentally ill. Instead: people with mental illnesses. Do not use wording such as *he is a* schizophrenic, she was anorexic or he is mentally ill. Use the term mental or psychiatric hospital, not asylum.

Examples: He was diagnosed with schizophrenia, according to court documents. She was diagnosed with anorexia, according to her parents. He said he was treated for depression.

Names

Never misspell a name. Ask all sources in a story how to spell his/her name. Make sure names are spelled correctly. Double check the spelling. Ask if he/she has a preference for a shortened or full-length reference to their names. Do not assume “Michael” is “Mike.” Do not assume “Smyth” is “Smith.”

Always verify the spelling of all names, including business names.

Numerals

See AP Stylebook entry. Briefly, follow these examples: No. 1 team; 20th century; 1st Ward; first in line; first base; 5-year-old boy; the 1990s; 12 credits; two semesters.

Write out numbers one through nine; 10+ use Arabic numerals. Examples: There were three children there. We saw 10 elephants at the zoo.

Percentages should use the symbol, not the word: 5%. (No space before the percent symbol.)

Write out numbers that begin a sentence. Example: Forty-five people attended.

If there are two references to the same item, and one is 10 or above, use numerals for both. Example: The program requires 36 credits, of which 9 are electives.

Use commas in numbers over 1,000: 1,500.

Do not use "over" to estimate a number. "Over" is a spatial reference. Use "more than," "nearly," "about." Try to avoid "approximately."

Official address of UW-River Falls

The official address of UW-River Falls is **410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022** (Please note that

south is abbreviated, 3rd is not spelled out, and street is also abbreviated.)

Passed Away

Do not use euphemisms such as “passed away.” Use “died” in all instances.

People of color, racial minority

The terms “people of color” and “racial minority/minorities” are generally acceptable terms to describe people of races other than white in the United States. Avoid using POC. When talking about just one group, be specific: Chinese Americans or members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, for example. Be mindful that some Native Americans say the terms people of color and racial minority fall short by not encompassing their sovereign status. Avoid referring to an individual as a minority unless in a quotation. In recent months, the acronym BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) has become popular, though the AP Stylebook has yet to add an entry.

Example: Voter turnout for minorities in the downtown district showed an increase compared to 2018, with Chinese Americans and Latinos bringing in 35% of the votes.

Percent

Use the symbol. Use figures in all instances and avoid starting a sentence with a percentage.

Example: Of the total, 25% were counted. (No space before the percent symbol.)

Phone numbers

Include the area code and write in the following manner: 715-425-3778. Do not use parenthesis around the area code. Do not use periods or dots to separate the numbers.

Play titles

Capitalize the titles of plays and put in quotes.

Pride, pride

Capitalize Pride when referring to events or organizations honoring LGBTQ communities and on subsequent references. Lowercase pride when referring to generic events or the general concept of LGBTQ pride.

Examples: “Are you going to Pride?” she asked. Several cities are holding Pride events this weekend. He attended a gay pride parade.

Prologue

UWRF’s literary magazine. Refer to it in quotes as “Prologue.”

Pronouns, inclusive language

Use the pronoun that matches the person’s authentic gender. A person who identifies as a certain gender, whether or not that person has taken hormones or undergone surgery, should

be referred to using the pronouns appropriate for that gender. If you are not certain which pronoun to use, ask the person, “What pronouns do you use?” (Source: [GLAAD Media Reference Guide](#)) If a person uses pronouns that are not familiar to most readers (such as xe or ze) or may grammatically confuse readers (such as they/them/theirs), include an explanation on first reference if you plan to use the pronouns in subsequent references. For example: Joe Smith, who uses they/them/theirs pronouns. When listing preferred pronouns, separate them with a forward slash and no spaces: he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs.

Quotation marks

Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations and to indicate the title of an article, section, volume and other parts of a longer document.

Always place periods and commas **inside** of closing quotation marks. Place semicolons and colons outside of closing quotation marks. Place dashes, exclamation marks and question marks inside of quotation marks if they are part of the quotation; otherwise, place them outside of quotation marks.

Quotes

Quotes should be used to convey unique information and should be their own separate paragraph with attribution. Do not overuse quotes. It is preferred to paraphrase quotes when possible.

Use “said” instead of “says.” Always begin the paragraph with the quote, not with who said it.

Quotes within a quote use single quotations marks. Example: “Nancy said to me, ‘I’m not sure how to answer that,’” Angela explained.

When including clarifying information within a quote, always use brackets [], never use parentheses or quotation marks. “They [Nancy and Tom] made an error,” said Angela.

Rooms

Generally, do not use the words “room” or “room number” with a location. Instead use: The meeting is in 138 Rodli Hall. Put the room number first, followed by the building/location.

Capitalize the word “room” if followed by a number or an actual name. Example: Room 137 or St. Croix River Room.

Always spell out “Kinnickinnic.” Do not use “Kinni Theater” when referring to the Kinnickinnic River Theater.

Roundabout

Roundabout is correct. No hyphens. All one word.

Semesters

Seasons/semesters are lowercase unless part of a proper title. Example: I started school in fall 2015. Please note: “of” should not be used between the season and year. Example: She made the dean’s list spring semester.

Do not capitalize the names of seasons, academic terms, or descriptive names for days.
Examples: fall, second semester, spring semester.

Sentence spacing

Use one space between sentences, not two. Do not indent paragraphs. Separate paragraphs by one blank line.

Special needs, special education

When possible, avoid these terms. While they remain in wide use in education and law, many view them as euphemistic and offensive. Instead, aim to be specific about the needs or services in question. Avoid writing that implies ableism: the belief that typical abilities—those of people who aren’t disabled—are superior.

Special occasions

Special occasions are not capitalized. Example: Thanks to everyone for the birthday wishes.

Words like birthday, anniversary, reunion and gala are lowercase. If you describe an event with a proper name (Sue’s Surprise 50th Birthday Bash), then use uppercase. Happy birthday is capitalized if you write “Happy Birthday, Zack!” It’s lowercase when you write, “I hope you had a happy birthday.”

State names

Spell out the names of states when they stand alone without a city.

Eight states are not abbreviated in sentences: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. When used in conjunction with the name of a city, town or village, use this list of state abbreviations: (For addresses only, use postal state abbreviations, not these. See Address entry.)

Ala.	Fla.	Md.	Neb.	N.D.	Tenn.
Ariz.	Ga.	Mass.	Nev.	Okla.	Vt.
Ark.	Ill.	Mich.	N.H.	Ore.	Va.
Calif.	Ind.	Minn.	N.J.	Pa.	Wash.
Colo.	Kan.	Miss.	N.M.	R.I.	W. Va.
Conn.	Ky.	Mo.	N.Y.	S.C.	Wis.
Del.	La.	Mont.	N.C.	S.D.	Wyo.

Never include Wisconsin with a city in Wisconsin. With all other cities (outside of Wisconsin), abbreviate the state name when preceded by a city. See list above for state abbreviations within sentences. **Please note** that these are different than postal abbreviations used in addresses. Also note that a comma follows the state abbreviation when in the middle of a sentence. Example: He lived in Stillwater, Minn., before moving to River Falls.

Strategic plan/campaign title

Do **not** place the name of the campaign title or the strategic plan in quotes. Just capitalize the first letter of each word. Example: The Rising to Distinction campaign was referenced at the gala as well as our strategic plan, Pathway to Distinction.

Students

Include hometown and state (if other than Wisconsin), major (lowercase) and academic year (sophomore, junior) when referring to UWRF students. Example: Sophomore Jane Smith of Duluth, Minn., was majoring in biology.

Student Voice

UWRF's student newspaper. Always capitalize. Do not italicize, do not put in quotes, do not bold. Example: It appeared in the Student Voice.

Telephone numbers

The format for an on-campus number is four digits: 3895. **Do not use "ext" or "x3895"** for on-campus numbers as it no longer applies. Example: Please call Sue in the Biology Department at 3895. Or include the complete phone number because of remote working: 715-425-3774.

Off-campus telephone numbers should always include the area code before the seven-digit number: 608-222-1234. **Use a dash to set off the area code, not parenthesis.**

Theatre/theater

All theatres on campus are spelled with "re" with one exception: the Kinnickinnic River Theater in the University Center where "er" is used.

Proper names of theatres at UWRF (such as Blanche Davis Theatre, Sanford Syse Theatre, Melvin Wall Amphitheatre) use the British English spelling (note the "re").

Time

Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes, except zero minutes. Use lowercase a.m. and p.m. and don't forget the periods in them. Example: 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m. **Do not use "2:00" p.m. for zero minutes; drop the zeros and just use 2 p.m.**

Do not use "12 noon" or "12 midnight." Just use "noon" or "midnight."
Avoid redundancies such as: 10 a.m. tomorrow morning, 12 noon Wednesday.

If you start by saying “between” or “from,” then you need to also use “to.” Do not use “between” or “from” and a hyphen. Examples: The party will be from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The party will be 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Titles

Capitalize the first letter of titles when they immediately **precede** personal names, but do not capitalize the first letter when they **follow** names. Example: Professor John Anderson went to bat. (No comma separates the title from the name when the title **precedes** the name.) Example: John Anderson, physics professor, wanted to get on the bus, too. (Commas separate the title from the name when the title **follows** the name.)

Job titles are lowercase unless they come **before** your name. Examples: I am a marketing coordinator at Acme Industries. Marketing Coordinator Jane Smith is going to post the ideas soon.

Capitalize the first letter of names of companies, schools, organizations, and religious bodies. Capitalize the first letter of names of government bodies.

Capitalize and use quotations marks with the titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, movies, television series and other separately published works. Capitalize and use quotations marks for chapters of books, articles in magazines, news stories or editorials, acts within a play, episodes of a television series, or other sections of something separately produced or published.

Names of elected officials are preceded by their title. Example: Wisconsin Gov. Suzie Smith. Use lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual’s name. Example: The dean provided a list of students.

Capitalize a title **before** a name. Example: Dean of Students Joe Smith, but lowercase a title **following** a name: Joe Smith, dean of students.

Capitalize and spell out formal titles but use lowercase for modifiers in the title before a name. Example: Professor John Jones, history Professor Tom Smith.

Transgender

Describes people whose gender identity does not match the sex they were identified as having at birth. Does not require what are known as sex reassignment or gender confirmation procedures. Identify people as transgender only if pertinent and use the name by which they live publicly. The shorthand *trans* is acceptable on second reference and in headlines. Do not use as a noun, such as referring to someone as a transgender, or use the term transgendered. Examples: Bernard is a transgender man. Christina is transgender. She was the Grammy Awards' first trans woman trophy handler.

Twin Cities

Acceptable in any reference to the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul together.

If an event is held in only one of these cities, name it specifically. If a person is from a suburb, name it. Do not say someone is from the Twin Cities. That is not possible.

Correct: Minneapolis/St. Paul

University

Lowercase "university" unless it is part of an official title. Examples: He has a university education. The University of Wisconsin-River Falls is a public university. Thank you for your continued support of our university.

Universities of Wisconsin

The abbreviated version is UW. Example: Tommy Thompson is no longer president of the Universities of Wisconsin.

University Police

Not "Campus Police" or "Campus Security." Capitalize as a department name: University Police Department.

URLs

Lowercase all letters in URLs in all instances. Example: www.uwrf.edu

Do not include "https://" in web addresses as the www lets everyone know that it's a web address. Example: For an enrollment form, go to www.uwrf.edu/admissions.

Do not use a colon to introduce the URL. Correct: For more information, visit www.uwrf.edu.

UW-River Falls

Use only these forms when referring to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls:

University of Wisconsin-River Falls (use hyphen/no spaces)
UW-River Falls (second reference only, use hyphen)
UWRF (second reference only, no hyphen)

The **official address** of UW-River Falls is **410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022** (Please note that south is abbreviated, 3rd is not spelled out, and street is also abbreviated.)

Always spell out University of Wisconsin-River Falls in the lead paragraph of a story. Then in second reference, use UW-River Falls or UWRF.

Website, webpage

Use lowercase and one word for website and webpage.

WRFW FM 88.7

On second reference, use “WRFW” or “the station.” Make sure to mention that it is a Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) affiliate.

Years

Use figures, without commas. Example: 1975. Use commas only with a month and day: Dec. 18, 1994, was a special day. See Dates entry.

Use an “s” without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries. Example: the 1890s, the 1800s, the ‘80s (not 80’s).

Years are the lone exception to the general rule in numerals that a figure is not used to start a sentence. Example: 1976 was a very good year.