UMBC

AN HONORS UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND

UMBC STYLE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This style guide was developed by the Office of Institutional Advancement to promote consistency in text prepared by UMBC departments and offices.

Sources used to prepare this guide include the *Associated Press Stylebook*, *Chicago Manual of Style* and the Purdue University Writing Lab (non-sexist language).

For more information please contact
Sara Sommerville
Director of Marketing and Creative Services
410-455-6828

UMBC ADDRESS AND HOMEPAGE

UMBC
1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, MD 21250

www.umbc.edu

CONTENTS

UMBC Address and Homepage A1

Abbreviations A2

Alumni Information A4

Capitalization A5

E-mail and Online Publications A8

Grammar and Punctuation A9

Miscellaneous Rules A11

Non-sexist Language A12

Numbers A13

President's Office A15

Reference Links on the Internet A16

Index A17

Revised 10/2002

ABBREVIATIONS

Academic Degrees

When abbreviating a degree, insert a period after each letter (no space between). Ph.D. is usually abbreviated.

M.S. in Applied Molecular Biology
B.A. in Africana Studies

UMBC Degrees

B.A., Bachelor of Arts
B.S., Bachelor of Science
B.S.E., Bachelor of Science in Engineering
M.A., Master of Arts
M.F.A., Master of Fine Arts
M.P.S., Master of Policy Science
M.S., Master of Science
Ph.D., Philosophiae Doctor (Doctor of Philosophy)

Other Degrees

A.B., Artium Baccalaureus (Bachelor of Arts)
A.M.,Artium Magister (Master of Arts)
B.D., Bachelor of Divinity
B.F.A., Bachelor of Fine Arts
D.B., Divinitatis Baccalaureus (Bachelor of Divinity)
D.D., Divinitatis Doctor (Doctor of Divinity)
D.D.S., Doctor of Dental Surgery
D.O., Doctor of Osteopathy
D.V.M., Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
Esq., Esquire
F.A.I.A., Fellow of the American Institute of Architects
F.R.S., Fellow of the Royal Society
J.D., Juris Doctor (Doctor of Law)
J.P., Justice of the Peace
L.H.D., Litterarum Humaniorum Doctor (Doctor of Humanities)
Litt.D., Litterarum Doctor (Doctor of Letters)
LL.D., Legum Doctor (Doctor of Laws)
M.D., Medicinae Doctor (Doctor of Medicine)
M.P., Member of Parliament
Ph.B., Philosophiae Baccalaureus (Bachelor of Philosophy)
Ph.G., Graduate in Philosophy
S.B., Scientiae Baccalaureus (Bachelor of Science)
S.M., Scientiae Magister (Master of Science)
S.T.B., Sacrae Theologiae Baccalaureus (Bachelor of Sacred Theology)

Ampersand

An ampersand should only be used for place names, e.g. Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery. In all other instances, the word "and" should be spelled out.

Campus Name

The four-letter acronym, UMBC, is how we want to be known. The university's full name — University of Maryland, Baltimore County — should be used when there is a need to be explicit about the name of the institution, e.g., when writing for an audience outside of the region. Even in these instances, the acronym should be used after the first reference. If UMBC is used throughout text, spell out when included in contact information.

Do not use University of Maryland; University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus; or University of Maryland at Baltimore County.

Use a colon to seperate the acronym and honors university tag line when referred to in print

UMBC:An Honors University in Maryland

Campus Offices and Departments That Use Abbreviations

Spell out the names of campus departments and offices and include the abbreviation in parentheses. On second reference, abbreviate with uppercase letters and no periods.

The Professional Associate Staff Senate (PASS) will meet on Thursday. PASS members will discuss....

Campus offices and departments that use abbreviations:

Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery (Kuhn Library; Library Gallery on second reference)
Baltimore Ecosystem Study (BES)
Center for Health Program Development and Management (CHPDM)
Center for Women and Information Technology (CWIT)
Division of Professional Education and Training (DPET)
Electronic Access to Student Information (EASI)
Emergency Health Services (EHS)
English Language Center (ELC)
Goddard Earth Sciences & Technology Center (GEST)
Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI)
Imaging Research Center (IRC)
Institute for Global Electronic Commerce (IGEC)
Joint Center for Earth Systems Technology (JCET)
Learning Resources Center (LRC)
Maryland Center for Telecommunications Research (MCTR)
Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (MIPAR)
Maryland Stage Company (MSC)
Office of Institutional Research (OIR)
Office of Institutional Advancement (OIA)
Professional Associate Staff Senate (PASS)
State Employees Credit Union (SECU)
Student Events Board (SEB)
Student Government Association (SGA)

Technology Research Center (TRC)
University Center (UC)
University Center Campus Information Resource Center (CIRC)
University System of Maryland (USM)

Committee Names

Spell out the names of campus committees and include the abbreviation in parentheses. On second reference, abbreviate with uppercase letters and no periods.

Days

Do not abbreviate days unless in tabular format where space is needed, then use first three letters of each day.

Months

Months may be abbreviated when a date is included but not when used alone or with a year.

The fall semester begins Sept. 1, 1999.

The fall semester begins in September 1999.

States

Spell out state names when used alone.

ALUMNI INFORMATION

Alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

Use alumnus (alumni in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school. Use alumna (alumnae in the plural) for similar references to a woman. Use alumni when referring to a group of men and women.

The fraternity’s alumni attended the awards ceremony.

The sorority’s alumnae attended the awards ceremony.

Listing

When desired, list major (lowercase unless proper noun) and then the year of graduation.

The meeting was led by Bill Glover, ‘90 information systems,
and included a discussion on this year’s events.

The meeting was led by Thomas Levering ‘77.

Including graduate degree

List abbreviated graduate degree following undergraduate degree.

Jack Suess, ‘81 mathematics and ‘95 M.S. information systems management

CAPITALIZATION

Board of Regents

Uppercase full title; otherwise lowercase.

The USM Board of Regents met at UMBC...

The regents approved a new arts building.

Buildings

Capitalize the full names of specific buildings, centers, laboratories, libraries and offices. On second reference, if no proper name is used, lowercase building, center, laboratory, library and office.

The meeting will take place in the Social Sciences Building. The building is located....

City

city of Baltimore

Baltimore City

Classes and Courses

Capitalize specific classes and courses; otherwise lowercase.

I am teaching Anatomy and Physiology this semester.

I am teaching an anatomy class this semester.

Committees

Capitalize names of specific committees.

Degrees

Capitalize the full name of a degree, as well as its abbreviation.

Master of Fine Arts in Imaging and Digital Arts

M.F.A. in Imaging and Digital Arts

Lowercase should be used when the degree is referred to in a general sense.

bachelor’s degree

master’s degree

She has a degree in political science.

The political science degree offers....

Grade Point Average

Do not capitalize except when abbreviating as GPA.

CAPITALIZATION (continued)

Historical Periods

Capitalize. Spell out first through ninth centuries and use numbers for 10th and above with century in lowercase.

the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the first century, the 19th century

Honors

Lowercase cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude.

Offices and Departments

Capitalize the names of departments, programs, offices and colleges when referred to specifically and/or full title is used. Lowercase if no proper name is used.

College of Engineering

Office of Undergraduate Admissions

undergraduate admissions office

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

chemistry and biochemistry department

The department offers....

Policy Sciences Graduate Program

The program is....

Race

Capitalize the names of nationalities, peoples, races, tribes, etc. Lowercase black, white when used to refer to races. Use the following terms:

African American
Chicano/a – once derogatory, now used by many to identify those from Mexico or Latin background living in the U.S.
Hispanic – refers to Latin descendants from Europe
Latino/a – refers to individuals of Latin descent with the exclusion of those from Europe
Native American

Regions

Uppercase North, South, East, West when referring to regions; lowercase when referring to compass points.

The university is located in the Northeast.

The building is north of Wilkens Avenue.

Seasons

Lowercase spring, summer, fall and winter.

Lowercase references to semesters.

fall semester

spring semester

State

Lowercase.

state of Maryland

the state

state funds

Students

Lowercase freshman, sophomore, junior and senior.

The freshman class was the largest in 10 years.

The

In titles of publications such as newspapers and magazines, "the" is capitalized, underlined or italicized only if considered part of the proper name.

The New York Times article on President Freeman Hrabowski…

UMBC initiatives have been featured frequently in the *Baltimore Business Journal…*

Titles

Capitalize titles that immediately precede a person’s name. Lowercase titles used in a general sense or if only a part of the title is used.

President Freeman Hrabowski....

Freeman Hrabowski, president of UMBC....

Associate Professor Joan Korenman....

Joan Korenman, associate professor....

Kenneth Baldwin, a professor of English at UMBC....

Kenneth Baldwin, a professor at UMBC....

The vice president said....

CAPITALIZATION (continued)

Titles of works

Capitalize the first letter of the following examples:

first and last words
nouns
pronouns
adjectives
verbs
adverbs
subordinating conjunctions (if, because, as, that, etc.)

Lowercase the following examples:

articles (a, an, the)
coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet)
prepositions
to (in infinitives)

University

Uppercase when referring to the official name of an institution.

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Lowercase when referred to in a general sense.

...gift to the university

university president Freeman Hrabowski

E-MAIL AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

New Words

CD-ROM
e-mail
home page
HTML
Internet
kilobyte (KB)
listserv
megabyte (MB)
online
PDF
RAM
URL
Web site
World Wide Web (WWW, the Web)

When providing a URL in a sentence

Web URLs should be treated as standard text, without the adding an "http" prefix or surrounding the address with <> symbols.

Visit our website at www.umbc.edu.

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Colon

The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc. A colon should not be used to introduce a list that is the complement or object of an element in the introductory statement.

> The committee includes Art, Lisa and Mark.
>
> The following people are on the committee:Art, Lisa and Mark.

Comma

Do not use a comma before the final "and" in a series.

> I am taking courses in history, English and creative writing.

Use a semicolon to separate the elements in a series if the elements contain commas.

> He leaves a son, John Smith; a daughter, Jane Smith and three grandchildren.

Use a comma before Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.

> Freeman A. Hrabowski, III

Use a comma after names of states and nations used with city names.

> She traveled from Dublin, Ireland, to Baltimore, Maryland, and back.

Do not use a comma between the season and the year, or between the month and the year unless you use the day. Use a comma after the year when the date comes within a sentence.

> June 22, 1989, was her birthday.

Essential and Non-Essential Phrases

An essential phrase is a word or group of words critical to the reader's understanding. Do not set it off from the rest of the sentence by commas.

> We're reading the award-winning book *Provincial Families of the Renaissance*.

A non-essential phrase provides more information about something but the reader would not be misled if the information were not there.

> We're reading the winner of the 1997 Marraro Prize, *Provincial Families of the Renaissance*.

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION (continued)

Italics, Quotation Marks

Movie titles - italics
Brochures, pamphlets, chapters, articles - quotation marks
Books - italics
Newspapers, magazines - italics
Music - songs generally in quotation marks or italics
Lectures - quotation marks
Gallery exhibits - italics
Grants - quotation marks
Plays - italics

Commas go within the quotation marks; dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go inside the quotation marks if they apply to the quoted matter, outside if they apply to the whole sentence.

The period goes inside the quote at the end of a sentence.

In running quotations, each new paragraph should begin with open quotation marks.

Plurals and Possessives

Add ‘s to plural nouns not ending in s.

children’s, women’s, alumni’s

Add apostrophe only to plural nouns ending in s.

The USM campuses’policies…

Add ‘s to singular nouns not ending in s. If a singular noun ends in s, add only the apostrophe.

The UMBC campus’policies…

Regents Professor is plural; no apostrophe is used.

Pronoun Agreement

A company or university is not a person. Do not use "they" or "who" when referring to a company or university. Use "it" or "that" or "which."

Spelling

If in doubt, call the office, department or the person directly to verify faculty, staff and student names. Name spellings are important. For special occasions (especially awards, nameplates, feature stories and anything else related to VIPs and fundraising), they are crucial. The authority on a person's name is the person. If unavailable, consult a business card, printed letterhead, resume, personal agent or other reliable source. Do not rely upon a newspaper or magazine article for name spellings.

That/Which

Use "that" to introduce a restrictive clause — that is, a clause that is essential to the meaning of the noun it modifies and will change the meaning if you leave it out.

> I want a copy of the book that just came out.

Use "which" for clauses that can be omitted, and set these clauses off with commas.

> I want a copy of your most recent book, which I'll read tonight.

Use "who/whom" – not "that/which" – if you are referring to a person.

MISCELLANEOUS RULES

Courtesy Titles

Use a person's first and last names on first reference, only the last name on subsequent references. Do not use courtesy titles such as Mrs., Ms., Dr. in text. These rules do not apply to letter writing.

Middle Initials, Middle Names

These are not necessary unless specifically requested. Many lists, such as the President's Board of Visitors, include them. Whatever you do, be consistent.

Order

Avoid random order.

> Anne, Barbara, Clara, Diane, etc.
> The president, provost, vice presidents and faculty....

Sentence Spacing

Within a paragraph of text, use only one space between a period and the next sentence.

NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Generic

Although *man* in its original sense carried the dual meaning of adult human and adult male, its meaning has come to be so closely identified with adult male that the generic use of *man* and other words with masculine markers should be avoided.

mankind - humanity, people, human beings
man's achievements - human achievements
the best man for the job - the best person for the job
man-made - synthetic, manufactured, machine-made
the common man - the average person, ordinary people
man the stockroom - staff the stockroom
nine man-hours - nine staff-hours

Occupations

Avoid the use of *man* in occupational terms when persons holding the job could be either male or female.

chairman - chairperson, coordinator (of a committee or department),
    moderator (of a meeting), presiding officer, head, chair
businessman - business executive
fireman - firefighter
mailman - mail carrier
steward and stewardess - flight attendant
policeman and policewoman - police officer
congressman - congressional representative

Pronouns

Because English has no generic singular – or common-sex – pronoun, we have used he, his and him in such expressions as "the student...he." When we constantly personify "the judge," "the critic," "the executive," "the author" and so forth, as male by using the pronoun he, we are subtly conditioning ourselves against the idea of a female judge, critic, executive or author. There are several alternative approaches for ending the exclusion of women that results from the pervasive use of masculine pronouns.

Recast into the plural.

> Use: Give students their papers as soon as they are finished.
> Not: Give each student his paper as soon as he is finished.

Reword to eliminate gender problems.

> Use: The average student is worried about grades.
> Not: The average student is worried about his grades.

Replace the masculine pronoun with one, you or (sparingly) he or she, as appropriate.

Use: A student who was satisfied with his or her performance on the pretest took the post-test.
Not: If the student was satisfied with his performance on the pretest, he took the post-test.

Alternate male and female examples and expressions. (Be careful not to confuse the reader.)

Let each student participate. Has he had a chance to talk? Could he feel left out?
Let each student participate. Has she had a chance to talk? Could he feel left out?

NUMBERS

General

Spell out at the beginning of a sentence, unless a calendar year.

Spell out numbers under 10; use figures for any number 10 or greater unless it begins a sentence.

Spell out and hyphenate fractions if the number is less than 10.

two-thirds, one-half

If the number is 10 or greater, the fraction is a figure also.

24 1/2

For ordinals, follow the same rule.

The ninth problem was hard, but the 10th was much easier.

Use the word "percent" instead of the symbol, unless in a chart or other statistical format.

Three percent, 100 percent

Spell out grade levels.

Do not use nd, rd, st, th with dates.

Use: Convocation is on October 2.
Not: Convocation is on October 2nd.

Use an apostrophe to indicate dropped numbers. Add "s" to show plural.

class of ‘72
1990s

NUMBERS (continued)

Money

Use a dollar sign and numbers; do not use a decimal and two zeros.

Use: $100
Not: $100.00

Use figures with million or billion.

Use: The campaign raised $50 million
Not: The campaign raised $50,000,000

Telephone Numbers

Area codes should always be used in external communications and should be followed by a hyphen.

410-455-1000

Time

Lowercase should be used for a.m. and p.m. with periods between letters.

When a time falls on the hour, omit the zeros.

Use: 8 p.m.
Not: 8:00 p.m.

Use noon and midnight instead of 12 a.m. and 12 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

If you are writing for President Freeman Hrabowski or for the Office of the President, please note these important stye preferences to be followed.

Capitalization

Department names and titles are always capitalized.

Use: students majoring in Imaging and Digital Arts.
Not: students majoring in imaging and digital arts.

Use: Craig Weidemann, the Executive Assistant to the President.
Not: Craig Weidemann, the executive assistant to the president.

References to UMBC as an institution are capitalized.

Use: the University needs funding to keep pace with technology.
Not: the university needs funding to keep pace with technology.

Significant University events are capitalized.

Use: Commencement, Convocation
Not: commencement, convocation

Commas

All items in a series are separated by commas.

Use: the students, the parents, and the faculty
Not: the students, the parents and the faculty

Compound Adjectives

Compound adjectives generally use hyphens.

Use: multi-level partnerships
Not: multilevel partnerships

Contractions

Don't use contractions.

Use: I am delighted that you were able to join me.
Not: I'm delighted that you were able to join me.

Infinitives

Use: She was ordered to leave immediately.
Not: She was ordered to immediately leave.

REFERENCE LINKS ON THE INTERNET

The Curmudgeon's Stylebook by *Washington Post* editor Bill Walsh
www.theslot.com/contents.html#start

Elements of Style by William Strunk, Jr.
www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/strunk

Merriam-Webster Online
www.m-w.com

Roget's Internet Thesaurus
www.thesaurus.com

INDEX

Abbreviations A2

Alumni information A4

Alumnus, etc. A4

Ampersand A3

Board of Regents A5

Buildings, capitalization of *A5*

Campus name A3

Campus offices and departments A3

Capitalization, Board of Regents A5

Capitalization,
  buildings A5
  city A5
  classes and courses A5
  committee names A5
  degrees A5
  grade point average A5
  historical periods A6
  honors A6
  offices and departments A6
  race A6
  regions A6
  seasons A7
  state A7
  students A7
  the A7
  titles A7
  titles of works A8
  university A8

City, capitalization of A5

Classes and courses, capitalization ofA5

Colon A9

Comma,
  general A9
  President’s office preference A15

Committees, capitalization of A5

Compound adjectives A15

Contractions A15

Days A4

Degrees, academic A2

Degrees,
  capitalization of *A5*
  other *A2*
  UMBC *A2*

E-mail and online publications A8

Essential and non-essential phrases A9

Grade point average, capitalization of A5

Grammar and punctuation A9

Historical periods, capitalization of A6

Honors, capitalization of A6

Infinitives A15

Italics A10

Listing,
  degree *A4*
  graduation year *A4*
  majors *A4*

Middle initials A11

Middle names A11

Months A4

Non-sexist language,
  generic *A12*
  occupations *A12*
  pronouns *A12*

Numbers,
  general A13
  money A14
  telephone A14
  time A14

Offices and departments, capitalization of A6

Order A11

Plurals A10

Possessives A10

President’s office style preferences
  capitalization A15
  commas A15
  compound adjectives A15
  contractions A15
  infinitives A15

Pronoun,
  agreement A10
  non-sexist A12

Quotation marks A10

Race, capitalization of A6

Regions, capitalization of A6

Seasons, capitalization of A7

Sentence spacing A11

Spelling A11

State,
  abbreviation A4
  capitalization of A7

Students, capitalization of A7

That/Which A11

The, capitalization of A7

Titles
  capitalization of A7
  courtesy A11

Titles of works, capitalization of A8