Trinity Western University Web Editorial Style Guide
April 9, 2009

Introduction

The Trinity Western University Web Editorial Style Guide is intended to help editors and writers avoid inconsistencies in spelling, capitalization and other matters of editorial style, which distract readers and undermine their confidence.

Range of application

The style guide is for use in web communications produced by all staff and faculty. It applies to all promotional, marketing and general communications materials on the TWU website.

It is not intended to apply to academic, scholarly or research texts, which will have their own style standards and guidelines.

Editorial assistance

University Communications can help with questions you may have regarding interpretation of points in this style guide, issues not covered here or matters of spelling. Please call **604.513.2027 ext. 3395 for assistance.**

The future of this style guide

Any style guide, this one included, is a work in progress. As new editorial questions arise and language and usage change, it will evolve. University Communications welcomes input from users of this guide in order to make it more useful.

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1. Writing for the Web (Referencing *Web Style Guide,* Second Edition, by Patrick Lynch and Sarah Horton: http://webstyleguide.com/)

Reading & Writing on the web:

People read text differently from a screen than from a page. Online readers tend to scan quickly for information and move on before they read everything on one page. Users roam from page to page quickly, collecting bits of information and backtracking often. Users can often access a page directly without being routed through a preamble page.

Web pages must be more concise and independent than print pages. The text must be clear and informative, providing essential links to avoid confusing a reader who may have stumbled across the page.

1.1 Writing Structure
1.2 Writing Style
1.3 Hyperlinks
1.4 Other tips

1.1 Writing Structure:

Good online writing is structured for scanning. Use page and section headings to describe important material. Place the important facts near the top of the first paragraph where users can find them quickly. Where possible, use lists: they are a concise way to communicate information that would otherwise seem long and complicated on a web page.

1.2 Writing Style:

Write as concisely as possible. Be sure to include paragraph breaks – they make the text easier to follow. Ask yourself if there is a quicker, clearer way to word your sentences. Cut the length of your text in half wherever you can.

Efficient writing is always better, but don't "dumb down" what you have to say. Avoid an overly conversational style. Write clearly, professionally and confidently. Where possible, write in the active tense ("she wrote the article" rather than "the article was written by her") to maintain clarity and interest.

For most web writing you should assume that your text will not be read word by word. This is *not* the case for texts such as journal articles or teaching materials: these more complicated texts will usually be printed and read offline.

It is always a good idea to ask at least one other person to proofread your text, especially if it

contains important or detailed information. Refer to this web editorial style guide whenever necessary.

1.3 Hyperlinks:

Providing essential links helps guide your reader and avoids dead-ends. However, links should be used carefully. Ensure that the site you are linking to contains updated content and complete information. Consider if it will help or confuse your reader. At times, providing the information concisely on the page is a better option than linking to a disorganized or confusing site. However, if there is an existing site that provides the information you need, linking directly to it avoids duplicating information on the TWU website.

When possible, include links in the text, instead of using the phrase "click here." This directs your reader more efficiently.

For example:
[Visit our editorial guide.](#)

Not:
To consult our editorial guide, [click here](#).

1.4 Other tips:

Write for an external audience. Avoid using abbreviations or terms that are known only to the internal TWU audience. Provide enough information (or links) to clarify terms that you must use which may be confusing to a first-time reader.

Avoid empty chatter like welcome text or instructions on how to use the site. Don't use the first paragraph of each page to tell users what information they'll find there. Instead, start with the information, written in the concise and factual prose style.

Stick to the point. Write in easily understood sentences. Steer clear of clever headings and catchy but meaningless phrases that users must think about and explore further to understand.

2. Copyright & Libel Information (Taken from Canadian Press Stylebook, 13th Edition)

2.1 Copyright
2.2 Libel

2.1 Copyright

1. Copyright is what gives the creator of an original work the exclusive right to benefit from it.

2. Copyright covers such creations as books, films, songs, articles and essays, letters, diaries, pictures or anything else that's original and in some permanent form. It can even extend to distinctive titles.

3. The copyright owner controls the right to reproduce the work, in whole or in substantial part.

4. This means there can be no *substantial* quotations from the copyrighted material without written permission of the copyright owner. Giving a mere credit to the copyright owner isn't sufficient.

5. *Substantial* has different meanings for different works. A complete stanza from a short pop song could be substantial. Generally, copying the heart of a work would be against copyright law.

6. An exception is made for quotations used in a review or critique, but it must be a bona fide review and the quotes should be no more than needed to make a critical point.

7. Generally government documents, speeches and most other material used in daily print are not copyright.

8. Over time, copyright protection is lost and the work falls into the public domain. In Canada, literary and artistic copyright expires 50 years after the author's death. Copyright on photographs expires 50 years after the negative has been processed.

9. Information cannot be copyrighted, only the form in which it is presented. Although newspapers frequently identify a story as being copyright, the actual news in the story cannot be protected. Someone else using an original method of expression may reproduce the information. Making a few changes in expression is not sufficient; the presentation must be substantially original.

2.2 Libel

1. Statements damaging to reputation must never be published unless there is a clear legal basis for doing so.

2. Anyone who repeats a libel is fully responsible for the libel no matter what its source.

3. Spelling, grammar and punctuation

3.1 Reference authorities for spelling, grammar and punctuation
3.2 List of troublesome words

3.1 Reference authorities for spelling, grammar and punctuation

The TWU Web Style Guide is to be used in conjunction with:
-   The most recent edition of the Canadian Oxford Dictionary (spelling)
-   The most recent edition of the Canadian Press Stylebook (editorial authority)

Online access to the Canadian Oxford Dictionary is available to TWU Library users at http://dictionary.oed.com/entrance.dtl

Use Canadian spelling according to the Canadian Oxford Dictionary.

Examples of Canadian spelling:
- Use "–our ," not "–or" ie: labour, honour, colour
- Use "enrol" and "enrolment" not "enroll" or "enrollment"
- Use "counsellor" not "counselor"
- Use "centre" not "center"

Exception:
- Use "program" not "programme"

NOTE: Use a simple "e" rather than diphthongs "ae" or "oe" ie: archeologist, ecumenical, encyclopedia, esthetic (except proper names ie: Caesar, Phoebe.)

3.2 List of troublesome words

The following word list is provided as a handy reference to some troublesome words. It follows the Canadian Oxford Dictionary except in references marked with an asterisk (*), which indicate exceptions to that authority.

a lot (not alot)
adviser
affect (verb: to have an effect on; noun: an emotion or mood)
behaviour
biannually
centre, centred
cheque
colour
counsellor
co-operative education, co-op
curriculum (s), curricula (pl)
effect (noun: result; verb: bring about)
email
enrol (not enroll), enrolled, enrolling, enrolment
ensure (to be sure of, to make sure)
grade-point average (GPA)
home page
honour, honourable, but honorary
humour, but humorous
Internet
its (possessive)
it's (contraction of "it is")
labour
lay off (verb), layoff (noun)
letter of permission
license (verb), licence (noun)
litre (abbreviation: L, for singular and plural, no period)
*Métis
online
per cent
practise (verb), practice (noun)
resumé
stationary (adjective), stationery (noun)
theatre
vice-president
web (but World Wide Web)
web page
web server
website
well-being
work term, work term placement
worldwide (but World Wide Web)

4. Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

4.1 Lower case

Use periods with abbreviations that appear in lower case.
e.g., a.k.a., a.m., p.m.

4.2 Upper case and small caps

Use no periods with abbreviations that appear in upper case or small caps.
VP, USA (US), CEO, BCE, CE

Use no periods with acronyms and initialisms.

Place course codes in upper case.
FREN 100

Place acronyms in upper case except when they have become common words.
NAFTA, NATO, NEPTUNE, VENUS, scuba, laser

Place initialisms in upper case.
WTO, BCAA, ICBC

For Canadian provinces and territories, use these abbreviations after the name of a community:
Alta.
B.C.
Man.
N.B.
Nfld.
N.W.T.
N.S.
Ont.
P.E.I.
Que.
Sask.

Place foreign currency codes in upper case.
EUR, USD

4.3 Mixed upper and lower case

Abbreviations with mixed upper and lower case other than academic degrees should have a period at the end.
Dr., Prof., Mr., Mrs., Ms.

When abbreviating personal names, use periods and a space between abbreviations.
P. D. James, W. A. C. Bennett

4.4 Academic degrees

Use no periods in academic degrees.
PhD, BSc, BA

Acceptable Names and Abbreviations of Academic Degrees are:

Bachelor of Arts (BA)
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Bachelor of Human Kinetics (BHK)
Bachelor of Education (BEd)
Bachelor of Science (BSc)
Doctor of Ministry (DMin [preferred] or D.Min)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD [preferred] or Ph.D)
Master of Applied Linguistics and Exegesis (MLE)
Master of Arts (NOT Masters of Arts; MA)
Master of Arts in Leadership (NOT Masters in Leadership OR Master of Leadership; MAL)
Master of Business Administration (NOT Masters of Business Administration; MBA)
Master of Counselling (MCS)
Master of Divinity (MDiv)
Master of Theology (MTh)
Master of Theological Studies (MTS)

NB: PhD only appears after the name of a person who has an earned PhD.

Dr. John Hunt, PhD has an earned PhD.
Dr. James Roland has an honorary PhD.

4.5 TWU and other universities

Spell out "Trinity Western University" in its first reference. Thereafter "TWU" is acceptable except in very formal instances.

The abbreviated form of the Trinity Western University does not use a period:
TWU

For information on the appropriate use of the Trinity Western University signature (logo), see http://www.twu.ca/divisions/ucomm/id-guide/

5. Capitalization

5.1 A note on capitalization

TWU uses the Canadian Press Stylebook, which follows a modified down style. This means that, where a reasonable choice exists, lowercase is used. The basic rule (from CP 13th ed. pg. 204):

Capitalize all proper names, trade names, government departments and agencies of government, names of associations, companies, clubs, religions, languages, nations, races, places, addresses. Otherwise lowercase is favoured where a reasonable option exists.

5.2 The case for lower case

This guide recommends a lower case style for several reasons:

- When too many words are capitalized, they lose their importance and no longer attract attention.
- Readability studies have shown that copy is more easily read when it isn't peppered with initial caps or all caps.
- Using lower case letters in no way diminishes the stature or credibility of an individual's position or a department's reputation.
- When writing promotional or marketing materials (such as brochures or print ads), emphasis can be achieved more effectively by the skillful use of white space, typeface and typestyle than by excessive use of initial caps or all caps.

5.3 The general rule

The general rule is to capitalize common nouns when they represent a complete formal name and use lower case in subsequent partial or informal forms.

the Ministry of Advanced Education; the ministry; the education ministry

the Government of Canada; the Canadian government; the government

the Government of British Columbia; the BC government; the government

the Board of Governors of Trinity Western University, the TWU board

Exception: Trinity Western University; the University (Capitalize only when "the University" is used as a shortened version of Trinity Western University.)

the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences, the sciences faculty, the faculty (To avoid confusion, use a construction such as "faculty members" when referring to people as opposed to the academic unit.)

5.4 What not to capitalize

Common nouns should not be capitalized, even when they are used in terminology specific to the university context, such as "grade-point average," "winter session," "letter of permission," "record of degree program" and "university fellowship."

5.5 Capitalization after colons

Do not capitalize the first letter of a common noun after a colon in running text, even if the colon is followed by a complete sentence.

5.6 Capitalization of job and position titles

In running text, capitalize formal job titles directly preceding a name and not set off by a comma. Use lower case in other instances.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper; the prime minister; Stephen Harper, prime minister

5.7 Capitalization and quotations

Capitalize the first word of a quotation that is a complete sentence.

5.8 Capitalization at TWU

5.8.1 Academic programs

Formal academic programs within faculties and departments and interdisciplinary academic programs follow the general rule for capitalization. Refer to the Trinity Western University Undergraduate Calendar for the complete formal names of programs.

5.8.2 Academic subjects

Do not capitalize academic subjects except when referring to a subject that is also a proper noun.

English, biology, French, history, physics, Spanish, law, Latin

When referring to the course offerings of a specific TWU department (as opposed to offerings in the general field of study or at other institutions), be explicit or use the standard course code.

"Prerequisites include at least six course credits in HIST," or "Prerequisites include at least six course credits in the TWU history department."

5.8.3 Awards, honours and decorations

Follow the general rule of capitalization: only capitalize the full formal title of the award or honour.

Trinity Western University Fellowship, university fellowship

5.8.4 Building names

Only the full, formal name of the building should be capitalized. Use lower case for all informal references:

the David E. Enarson Gymnasium; the gymnasium

Norma Marion Alloway Library; the library

Refer to buildings and other university venues named after people by using either the family name or the person's full name, but use one or the other convention consistently within a publication.

Mattson Centre, Enoch E. Mattson Centre

5.8.5 Committee names

The names of committees, task groups and other working groups need not be capitalized.

the planning and priorities committee

the nominations and committee governance committee

5.8.6 Degrees, certificates and diplomas

The general rules of capitalization apply.

Master of Arts, master's degree; baccalaureate

Diploma in Leadership, leadership diploma

Distinctions within degree programs, such as major, minor, honours; concentrations or specialties; co-op designation; with distinction, etc. should not be considered part of the official program name and should not be capitalized in running text.

honours in political science, political science honours program

minor in music

major in environmental studies

5.8.7 Department and unit names

Follow the general rules of capitalization. Please refer directly to the department for its formal name.

Department of English; the English department; the department

School of Education; education sciences; the school

5.8.8 Job titles

Please contact individual departments directly for formal job titles in their units.

Capitalize formal job titles directly preceding a name and not set off by commas. Use lower case in other instances.

Director of TWU Pond Management Jane Doe; Jane Doe, director of pond management; the director

Always hyphenate the title "vice-president."

When referring to TWU vice-presidents, do not set off their area of responsibility with commas; however, the same rules of capitalization apply.

The senior vice-president geese relations and provost will have authority to ...

The senior vice-president geese relations will chair the committee.

John Smith, senior vice-president geese relations, will give the opening speech.

In running text, use academic ranks (assistant, associate, full professor) only when the context makes it necessary.

The preferred academic title is Dr. for a PhD, MD or equivalent. For those with a postgraduate degree but no PhD, MD, etc., "Professor" or "Prof." is the preferred title.

Exceptions may be made in order to conform to the appropriate level of formality in communicating with a particular audience.

Academic titles should only be used in the first reference; subsequent references to the individual generally should be by family name only. Exceptions may be made in order to conform to the appropriate level of formality in communicating with a particular audience.

In general, identify the department or school affiliation of a person at first reference.

Dr. Jane Doe (physics) or TWU physicist

Dr. Jane Doe.

Use the latter format only if it makes clear the department affiliation.

<u>5.8.9 Research centres and major research projects</u>

Follow the general rules of capitalization.

Laurentian Leadership Centre, the centre

Institute for Policy, Planning and Research, the institute

5.9 Cultural and historic periods

Cultural and historic periods are capitalized.

the Bronze Age, the Ice Age, the late Middle Ages, the Renaissance.

Historic events should also be capitalized.

World War I, the Crusades, the Holocaust

Descriptive designations should be set in lower case except for proper names.

the Victorian era, ancient Rome, medieval manuscripts

5.10 Other capitalizations

Capitalize the complete formal name of the following:

proper names of nationalities, peoples, ethnicities and tribes (e.g. Aboriginal, Indigenous, Métis, Coast Salish, Canadian, Ainu)—see Inclusive language

titles of books, films, plays, poems, songs, speeches, works of art

brand names (follow the company's capitalization)

holidays and holy days

laws and historic documents

full name of organizations and institutions

political parties and movements

religions

deities

6. Times and dates

6.1 Times
6.2 Days
6.3 Months
6.4 Years

6.1 Times

1. Write time in figures, except for **noon** or **midnight**. Don't use **12 noon** or **12 midnight**.

2. Write **6 a.m.** not **6:00 a.m.**

3. Write **a.m.** and **p.m.** not **am** and **pm**.
   10 a.m., 3:30 p.m.

4. A colon separates hours, minutes and seconds when figures are used. A period separates seconds from tenths of seconds.
   Her time was 3:40:20.6.

6.2 Days

1. Name the day rather than using **yesterday**, **today** and **tomorrow**.

2. Try to use both the day and the date for significant events.
   The annual meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 19.

6.3 Months

1. When months are used without specific dates, spell them out in full.
   January 2003 was an exceptional month. A meeting will be held next August.

2. When months are used with specific dates, abbreviate only **Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,** and **Dec.**
   Nov. 2, 2003 was a particularly cloudy day.

3. Always spell out a month if that is how it appears in a name.
   the November 17 crisis, the December 10 blackout

6.4 Years

BC and AD

1. AD precedes the year and BC follows the year.
   70 BC, AD 520

2. BUT write: **14ᵗʰ century AD**

7. Numbers

7.1 General usage
7.2 When to use figures
7.3 When to spell out
7.4 Large numbers

7.1 General usage

1. In general, spell out numbers under 10 and use figures for numbers 10 and above.
   Three batters, 11 fig trees, etc.
   - in a series there will often be a mixture
     There are 34 trees on the property: five cedar, 15 spruce, four hemlock, and 10 alder.

2. For numbers in official names, use the organization's spelling style even if it conflicts with this style guide.
   7Up, 3M, etc.

3. Use arabic numerals rather than roman numerals, except to indicate sequence for people and animals and in proper names where specified (**Queen Elizabeth II, Pope John XXIII**).

4. Do not use commas with dimensions, measurements and weights consisting of two of more elements.
   That man is five feet 10 inches. (NOT: **That man is five feet, 10 inches.**)

The tour was one month two weeks four days. (NOT: The tour was one month, two weeks, four days.)

5. To be meaningful, a percentage loss or gain should normally be accompanied by a dollar or some other amount
Participants in the event increased 14 per cent to 640 people.

7.2 When to use figures

1. In addresses:
4 Southgate St. or 7600 Glover Rd.
Note: Spell out First through Ninth as street names: 45 Second Ave.

2. In ages standing alone after a name:
John, 19, has already held seven different jobs.

3. In dates and years:
200 BC, AD 50, Dec. 14, 9th of December, 1987, the 1950s, the mid-1950s, He's in his late 40s.
Note: Write the second century, the ninth century, the 10th century, the 20th century.

4. In decimals, and in numbers larger than 1 with fractions, and in uncommon fractions:
0.24 of a percentage point, 0.25 centimetre, a .30-calibre rifle, 15/16ths
But: two-fifths, two-thirds
Note: If there is no unit before a decimal point, use a cipher: 0.25. But write .30 calibre and the like in keeping with common practice.

5. In decisions, rulings, scores, votes and odds:
The court ruled 6-3, Vancouver beat Calgary 8-2, the bill was passed by a vote of 34-8, the odds were 10-3.

6. In military and paramilitary terms:
2nd Lieut. John Smith (BUT: John Smith is a second Lieutenant.), M-16 rifle, 8th Army, 1st Canadian Division.

7. In monetary units preceded by a symbol:
$2 (BUT: two dollars), $5 million (BUT: five million people)

8. In designations of aircraft, ships, spacecraft and vehicles:
Dash 8, A-4 Skyhawk, Apollo 8.

9. Sequential designations:
   Act 1, Channel 8, Highway 1.

10. In temperatures:
    6 C, -9 C

11. In times:
    1 a.m., 8 in the evening, 5 o'clock, 9:15 p.m.

12. For latitude and longitude:
    53 degrees 40 minutes north

7.3 When to spell out

1. At the start of a sentence, if you start with a number:
   Fifty to 60 people will be attending the party
   Note: Do not spell out the year or an address at the beginning of a sentence, but avoid beginning a sentence with a year or address.

2. In informal usage:
   People came by the hundreds and thousands. There was millions in damage.

3. In figures of speech:
   Twelve Apostles, Ten Commandments

4. In common fractions below 1 standing alone
   One-quarter, two-thirds

7.4 Large numbers

1. Numbers in the thousands are usually given in figure.
   There were 5,000 homes built. $4,800, 450,000 francs

2. Try to express large numbers in millions and billions rather than the less familiar trillion, quadrillion and the like.
   A million billion (instead of **quadrillion**)

3. Hyphenate adjective forms before nouns.
   a $5-million gap, a $2-million car

4. Use commas to set off numbers of four or more figures except house, telephone, page, year and other serial numbers.

4,500; 200,000 million; 7600 Glover Rd.

5. Use numbers for figures up to 999,999. Above that, switch to words unless absolute precision is required.
   A loss of $450,000, a $2.5 million project

8. Institutional names and terms

8.1 Institutional names

8.1.1 University:

Always: "Trinity Western University"

"TWU" may be used as an abbreviation *after* the first use of the full university name. Never refer to the university only by its abbreviation without first stating the full name.

Not: "Trinity," or "Trinity Western"

8.1.2 Centres, Campuses, Institutes, Schools:

Centres and Campuses should be referred to by their full names, and should be capitalized. As a rule, "the" is not usually part of an official name.

Write: Laurentian Leadership Centre

Not: The Laurentian Leadership Centre

8.1.3 Buildings:

Capitalize the names of campus buildings that are named. Do not use "the" as part of the building name.

Northwest Building

Robert N. Thompson Building

CANIL Harvest Centre

Douglas Centre

Fosmark Centre

Mattson Centre

Neufeld Science Centre

Reimer Student Centre

Stanley Nelson Centre

Sylvie Vanderkerkhove Seal Kap Centre

Vernon Strombeck Centre

Welcome Centre

Calvin B. Hanson Chapel

Marlie Snider Collegium

West Coast Collegium

David E. Enarson Gymnasium

Douglas Hall

Fraser Hall

McMillan Hall

Robson Hall

Norma Marion Alloway Library

Not Capitalized:

...campus services building

...the faculty house

...the atrium

...the portables

...the music building

...outdoor facilities

...the field house

...faculty offices

<u>8.1.4 Academic Departments and Programs:</u>

While the name of a subject of study or program is not capitalized, the name of an academic department is:

John Woo has a doctorate in chemistry.

She is studying history at Trinity Western University.

The school's biotechnology program is growing rapidly.

The History Department will host an information night on Wednesday.

A new professor has joined the English Department.

<u>8.1.5 University Departments, Divisions, Services and Offices:</u>

Capitalize all official names of university departments and divisions:

Student Life

Undergraduate Admissions

8.2 Institutional terms

8.2.2 Alumna/us/ae/i

1. Use the word "alumni" to refer to a group of people of both sexes (or where the sex of the group members is unknown) who have graduated from university.

2. "alumnus" refers to an individual male graduate
   "alumna" refers to an individual female graduate
   "alumnae" refers to a group of female graduates

8.2.2 Emeritus

1. The honorific "emeritus" is used to denote chancellors, presidents, faculty members, librarians and senior instructors who have retired but retain their rank or title.

2. The term "emeritus" is used in referring to male or female individuals.

3. For referring to more than one individual, the preferred usage is "professors emeritus."

   Deane Downey, professor emeritus, chaired the committee.
   John A. Anonby, English professor emeritus
   Kenneth R. Davis, professor emeritus of history and religious studies
   Professor Emeritus Carl J. Tracie
   The department's faculty members included two professors emeritus.

8.2.3 Undergraduate/graduate students

Try to specify "graduate" or "undergraduate" when referring to students.