

Editorial Standards Quick Guide for Georgia Southern University (12/2019)

The basic Georgia Southern University editorial standards are listed on this sheet. Additional questions should be directed to University Communications and Marketing at marketing@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-6397.

Our editorial style generally adheres to *The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook*. AP Style, used in most professional publications, is all about consistency, clarity, accuracy and brevity. There are thousands of entries in the *Stylebook*, which is far more than we can cover here. Use this Quick Guide when you and other campus communicators are preparing copy for print and electronic distribution.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

First References

- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia Southern University Armstrong Campus in Savannah
- Georgia Southern University Liberty Campus in Hinesville
- Georgia Southern University Statesboro Campus

Preferred Written Secondary References

- Georgia Southern
- Armstrong Campus in Savannah or Armstrong Campus
- Liberty Campus in Hinesville or Liberty Campus
- Statesboro Campus

Do not abbreviate as GS. Use of GS is only acceptable as part of a quote from an external source, such as an alumnus.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY COLLEGES (*in correct alphabetical order*)

- Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Computing
- College of Arts and Humanities
- College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- College of Education
- College of Science and Mathematics
- Jack N. Averitt College of Graduate Studies
- Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health
- Parker College of Business
- Waters College of Health Professions

OFFICIAL BOILERPLATE

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 26,000 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

ABBREVIATIONS

Capitalize letter abbreviations of academic degrees.

B.A., MSA, MBA, Ph.D.

(Note that periods are omitted when there are three or more consecutive capital letters).

Make abbreviations plural by adding s.

Example: MBAs, AP STYLE Ph.D.s (but Ph.D.'s looks better)

Doctor: Dr. is used to refer to a doctor of medicine, optometry, dentistry or veterinary medicine. However, if appropriate in the context in a college publication, Dr. also may be used on first reference before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. Do not use Dr. for official University press releases and other materials.

ACADEMIC DEGREES

M.S., master's degree, Master of Science, doctorate, doctoral degree, Ph.D., are all acceptable.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor's degree, a master's, etc., but there is no possessive in Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science. Use the B.S., M.A. and the Ph.D. abbreviations after a full name and set the abbreviations off with commas in a sentence:

Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D., delivered the Convocation address.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The word program should only be capitalized if it is an official part of a title.

Examples: She is a scholar in the University Honors Program. The Department of History's program covers the Korean War.

AMPERSAND (&)

Avoid using an ampersand unless it is part of an official title.

CAPITALIZATION

AP EXCEPTION: Titles of books, journals, newspapers and periodicals should be capitalized and italicized. Names of lectures, poems, songs, movies, television programs and plays are capitalized and placed in quotation marks. Lowercase names of a major, minor or programs of study. Job descriptions are lowercased.

Examples: the singer Bruno Mars, writer J.K. Rowling.

Capitalize letter abbreviations of academic degrees.

Capitalize Homecoming, Convocation and Commencement when used in reference to Georgia Southern.

CAPTIONS

Aim for consistency and quick identification. List subjects from left to right, using full name and title. End sentence with a period and include "left to right" or "from left," for clarity in each caption.

COMMAS

Serial Comma: In keeping with AP Style, Georgia Southern does not use the serial comma also known as the Oxford comma. The serial comma is the final comma in a list of three items or more and is used before and, or, and other conjunctions.

Instead: Do not put a comma before the conjunction in three or more items in a simple series or list:

Examples: Apples, oranges and bananas. The event is for students, professors, parents and friends. She should choose blue, purple, yellow or orange. A combination of self-control, brutally honest advice and down-home wisdom.

Use a comma in a complex list of three or more items to improve comprehension.

Example: The dean tripled the size of the faculty, created a branding committee, and revised the social media platform to reach first-year students and their parents.

Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in importance.

Example: Georgia Southern is a public, coeducational institution of more than 20,000 students.

Use commas to complete sentences that are combined with a conjunction.

Example: The picnic is open to the public free of charge, but reservations are required.

Use a comma in an introductory phrase.

Example: First, we will count the number of students.

Use a comma to set off a nonessential phrase (a phrase that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence) from the rest of a sentence and days from a date.

Example: The football team, coached by Chad Lunsford, will play its first home game in Allen E. Paulson Stadium.

Use a semicolon to set off a series that include commas.

Example: The major speakers are from Bulloch County, Georgia; Buffalo, New York; and Springfield, Illinois.

DATES AND TIMES

When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out when using month alone, or with a year alone.

Example: It rained in January 2017.

Express time at the top of the hour without zeroes. Lowercase with periods a.m. and p.m. 9 a.m., 10:45 a.m.

Dates consisting of day, month and year should be set apart by commas.

Example: The committee decided that Friday, Aug. 10, 2017, would be a convenient time for the event.

Commas are not used when listing only the month and day or only the month and year.

Example: Sept. 10, September 2018.

DATES AND TIMES *(continued)*

Times generally come before days and dates.

Example: The multicultural event is set for 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 22, 2017, in the Williams Center.

12 a.m. should be referred to as midnight; 12 p.m. should be referred to as noon.

Hyphens may be used with dates, and should always be used when days of the week and dates are included.

Example: The symposium is scheduled next Monday through Thursday, May 10-14.

If the text is such that "from" precedes the date, then use "to" instead of the hyphen.

Example: From 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Do not use "st," "nd," "rd," after the number for dates.

Right: Oct. 10. *Wrong:* Oct. 10th.

Exception: You may begin a sentence with a calendar year. 2016 was a popular election year.

DIRECTIONS AND REGIONS

Lowercase when indicating compass directions. Capitalize when indicating a region of the country.

Example: The woman with the Southern accent left the restaurant to continue driving south.

DISABILITIES

In general, do not describe an individual as handicapped or disabled. Try to be specific, if you must use a description: He has Parkinson's disease. Use accessible parking rather than disabled or handicapped parking.

ETHNIC DESIGNATIONS

Hyphenate African-American, Asian-American, Mexican-American, Cuban-American. Also: Caucasian, white, black, Hispanic, Latino, Latina, Native American, Cherokee.

HYPHENS

Do not use a hyphen for adverbs that end with "ly." Use a hyphen when you have a number plus a noun of measurement.

Examples: A 1,200-square-foot home, a 3-inch bug.

Use a hyphen when a compound modifier — two or more words that express a single concept — precedes a noun: He is a full-time employee and a first-time buyer, a much-needed vacation, a University-related program. The words vice president and vice chair are not hyphenated.

Numbers: When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in -y to another word (twenty-five).

Non and prefixes: Do not hyphenate words beginning with non except if there is a proper noun or in awkward combinations such as, nonprofit, non-American, non-nuclear

Hyphenate part time and full time only when used as adjectives.

Example: She works at Georgia Southern full time and has a part-time position at church.

Telephone numbers: Use area codes with hyphens for all telephone numbers. This has become necessary because of the increasing use of cell phones: 609-258-3000.

NUMBERS

Spell out numbers under 10 and use figures for the numbers 10 and over, except when a number begins a sentence — then spell it out or re-work the sentence. Use the same rule for ordinal numbers (three, four, 12, 13). You may also standardize to figures when the text includes several numbers. *See telephone numbers note, just above.*

Examples: The service lasted 11 hours, 9 minutes and 22 seconds.

Write dollar amounts in figures, unless they begin a sentence, then spell out in full.

Examples: The fee is \$10. Ten dollars will be charged for parking. Spell out million and billion: \$1.5 million

Spell out fractions less than one, using a hyphen between the words.

Example: One-half, three-fourths, 2-1/2 laps, 3.4 percent.

Use numbers for ages and percentages, even for numbers less than 10. Spell out the word percent.

Examples: 2 percent, 51 percent, 6-year-old, 16-year-old. 6-year-old girl, The girl, 6, has a brother, 11. The race is for 3-year-olds. The woman is in her 30s.

Place a comma after digits signifying thousands except when reference is to temperatures: 1,100 students, 2100 degrees Fahrenheit

Exception: You may begin a sentence with a calendar year. 2016 was a bad year.

PUNCTUATION

Apostrophe: Apostrophes are not necessary between the final number and the s in making the plurals of figures: 1800s, the '90s'. Single or multiple letters used as words form a plural by adding only an s, as long as the meaning is clear: CEOs, two Cs, CDs, but use apostrophe and s for abbreviations with periods: M.A.'s. AP STYLE Ph.D.s but Ph.D.'s looks better.

Colons: Capitalize the first word after a colon if it is the start of a sentence.

Dash (em dash): Used to indicate emphasis.

Example: Sierra—and her furry pet—arrived last week.

Others prefer spaces around dashes, be consistent. *Example:* Sierra — and her furry pet — arrived last week.

Ellipses: Treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word (. . .) constructed with three periods and two spaces, one on each side. *Example:* ... As long as there was ... a base.

Exclamation Points: Never use more than one at the end of a sentence!!!!

Quotation Marks: Commas and periods ALWAYS go INSIDE the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation mark go inside the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted material. They go outside when they apply to the entire sentence.

Example: "What is meant by rocket science?" asked the student. What is meant by "rocket science"?

Use single quotation marks in headlines. If several paragraphs are to be quoted, use quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph, but only at the end of the last paragraph. No quotation marks are necessary in printing interviews when the name of the speaker is given first, or in reports of testimony when the words question and answer or Q and A are used, such as:

Jones: How do you plan your curriculum?

Smith: A committee does that.

SEASONS

Lowercase the four seasons: winter, spring, summer, fall. Capitalize season if it is an official title: Fall Semester 2017. It will start in fall 2018 (better than "it will start in the fall of 2018"). The course is only offered in the spring semester.

STATE NAMES

The names of the 50 U.S. states should be spelled out when used in the body of a story, whether standing alone or in conjunction with a city, town or military base. U.S. Post Office abbreviations are only used in mailing addresses.

TITLES

Do not use courtesy titles (Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs.). Generally use the title Dr. only when referring to a medical doctor.

President, Dean, Professor, Associate Professor, Chairman: capitalized as a formal title before a name, lowercased when after the name or when they are not used with a name. Board of directors/board of trustees is always lowercase.

Examples: committee Chairwoman Margaret Smith.

Do not capitalize as a casual, temporary position: meeting chairman Robert Jones.

Names followed by Jr., Sr. or a Roman numeral do not have a comma after the last name: Martin Luther King Jr.

UNITED STATES

Spell out as a noun, abbreviate as an adjective: the U.S. Department of State.

WORD USAGE

Alumna, alumnus, alumni: Alumna (alumnae is plural) refers to one female graduate, alumnus (alumni is plural) refers to one male graduate and alumni refers to male graduates and to mixed groups of male and female graduates.

Data is always plural

Hands-on is hyphenated

Toward, forward, afterward, backward, etc. do not end in an "s."

