

Oberlin College

Guide to Editorial Style and Usage

4th edition, December 2011

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Guide to Editorial Style and Usage

This style guide will not, nor is it intended to, cramp your style.

When editors and writers talk about editorial style, they are referring to the guidelines they use in capitalizing, abbreviating, punctuating, and spelling. When they talk about usage, they are referring to what the *Chicago Manual of Style* calls “the collective habits of a language’s native speakers.” In other words, using words and grammar in a way that will best convey a text’s information to readers.

The staff of the Office of Communications has compiled and published this guide to promote consistency in Oberlin College publications and websites, especially to those going to external audiences. Employing one editorial style creates a consistent and professional voice for Oberlin, and assures our readers that the many materials they receive from us or view on the web are indeed coming from the same institution.

The World Wide Web has its own language, of which some terms are constant while others are fluid. However, the same editorial standards and guidelines for the written or printed word apply to the Internet.

You should use the *Oberlin College Guide to Editorial Style and Usage* in conjunction with the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, to which the Oberlin College Library maintains a subscription (see Citation Guides and Style Manuals on the [Reference Sources](#) webpage) ; *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition; and the *Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*.

Entries are organized alphabetically. Some entries stand by themselves; in these cases, the entry represents the correct spelling or usage of the phrase.

As language changes, so will this style guide. To submit suggestions for additions or clarifications, please contact us.

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4th edition, December 2011

A

a, an Use the article *a* before consonant sounds: *a historic event*, *a one-year term* (sounds as if it begins with a *w*), *a united stand* (sounds like *you*).

Use the article *an* before vowel sounds: *an energy crisis*, *an honorable man* (the *h* is silent), *an NBA record* (sounds like it begins with the letter *e*).

abbreviations see **addresses**; **days**; **degrees**; **academic**; **dates**; **months**; **state names**; **time zones**.

Academic All-American, All-American

academic departments and programs Capitalize the names of academic departments and programs when using their full formal names. (*Department of History*, *Rhetoric and Composition Program*). In informal references, use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives (*history department*, *English department*, *Jewish studies program*). Refer to the Oberlin College Course Catalog or the Oberlin College Directory (Fussers). See **capitalization**.

academic disciplines Do not capitalize the names of academic disciplines, fields of study, majors, or minors unless the names are proper nouns. *Jill plans to study history and African American literature. Jack is pursuing a major in economics. Sally is a violin performance major.* See **capitalization**

academic honors The phrases *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *summa cum laude* should not be italicized. Students may also earn honors at Oberlin—honors, high honors, and highest honors. These terms are not capitalized in running text. *She earned highest honors in biology.* See **foreign words and phrases**.

academic titles see **titles, academic and professional**

academic year It is correct to separate the years with a hyphen and to shorten the form for the second year in the construction: *the 2009-10 academic year*. This form is also appropriate for fiscal years.

accent marks see **formatting**

acknowledgment Not acknowledgement.

act numbers Use Arabic figures and capitalize act: *Act 1*; *Act 2*, *Scene 2*.

But: the first act, the second act.

AD, BC See **eras**

addresses Use the abbreviations *Ave.*, *Blvd.*, *Ct.*, *Dr.*, *Rd.*, and *St.* with a numbered address: *100 Professor St.*, and in tabular material. Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: *Professor Street*. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *West Lorain and Woodland streets*.

All similar words (alley, terrace, etc.) are spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number; lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.

Always use figures for an address number: *27 E. Lorain St.*

Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures with two letters for 10th and above: *7 Fifth Ave.*, *100 21st St.*

Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: *600 K St. NW*, *27 E. Lorain St.* Do not abbreviate if the number is omitted: *West Lorain Street*.

addresses in class notes In class notes sections of college publications, use standard abbreviations and not postal abbreviations for state names. However, if the state name appears as part of a mailing address within the note, use the postal abbreviation. See **state names**.

addresses in running text Use commas to separate units: *A native of Los Angeles, California, she is a member of the women's track team.*

administrative offices Capitalize the names of Oberlin College offices when using the official, formal name. Refer to the Oberlin College Directory (Fussers) for the full official names of college offices. *The Office of Admissions is in the Carnegie Building. Speak to someone in the communications office.* See **capitalization**

advisor not adviser

affect/effect Affect, as a verb, means to influence. *The president's decision will affect the timing of the program.*

Affect, as a noun, is best avoided. It is sometimes used in psychology to describe an emotion.

Effect, as a verb, means to cause: *He will effect many changes at Oberlin.*

Effect, as a noun, means result: *The effect was overwhelming.*

African American See **bias-free language, ethnic and racial designations**

afterward Not afterwards.

ages Always use numerals: *He has a 3-year-old son. He is 3 years old.* See **numbers**

a lot Use *many* instead.

all-American

all right Not *alright*.

alum, alums Use sparingly, but not in first reference

alumni class year See **class year**.

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.

Alumni Association Capitalize *Oberlin College Alumni Association* and *Alumni Association*. Do not capitalize *association* when used on second and subsequent reference or when standing alone.

- o Danielle Young is the executive director of the Oberlin College Alumni Association.
- o All Oberlin College graduates are members of the Alumni Association. Membership in the association is free.
- o The association plans to have its annual meeting in September.

See **capitalization**

Alumni Council The governing body of the Alumni Association. May be referred to as *the council* on second and subsequent reference.

Alumni Council Executive Board Capitalize the full formal name of this group. Also capitalize the

shortened form, Executive Board. May be referred to as *the board* on second or subsequent reference.

a.m., p.m. In running text, time designations are lowercase and punctuated with periods. Avoid the redundant *10 a.m. this morning*. In tabular material and advertisements, small caps without periods are acceptable. *11 AM, 10 PM*. See **time**.

ampersand see **Punctuation Appendix**

and/or Avoid this construction.

anxious Use in reference to anxiety, not eagerness.

anybody, anyone *Anybody* and *anyone* take singular verbs. However, *they* or *their* are both acceptable second references to avoid using "his or her": On Wednesday, *anyone* in the restaurant may get *their* meal for a reduced price.

See **everybody, everyone**.

apostrophe See **Punctuation Appendix**.

area code In running text, use a hyphen following an area code: *440-775-8474*. See **telephone numbers**.

archeology

art exhibitions Italicize the names of art exhibitions. See **titles of works**

art, works of Use italics to name works of art. See **titles of works**.

Arts and Sciences, College of see **Oberlin College**

articles In titles of books, periodicals, and musical works, an initial *a*, *an*, or *the* may be dropped if it does not fit the surrounding syntax. *The orchestra performed Stravinsky's Rite of Spring*. See **titles of works**.

Artist Recital Series Capitalize the full formal name of this series. May be referred to as *the series* or *the ARS* on second and subsequent references.

Asian See **ethnic and racial designations**.

athletics department

athletics director

awhile as in *Let's wait awhile*. But: *It was quite a while before we saw him again*.

B

Baccalaureate capitalize when referring to Oberlin's Baccalaureate ceremony, held each year the day before Commencement. There is no need to capitalize when referring to the address given during the ceremony, baccalaureate services at other institutions, or when used to mean a bachelor's degree.

bachelor's degree See degrees, academic.

backward Not backwards.

baroque Do not capitalize.

black See ethnic and racial designations.

best seller (n), best-selling (adj) Dan Chaon is a best-selling author. *Await Your Reply* is a best seller.

biannual happening twice a year

bias-free language Avoid language that is biased toward race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. Remember, people categorize and perceive themselves in many different ways. Do not include information that is not relevant to your topic.

Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Designations

When writing about individuals whose ethnicity or race is relevant to the story, ask them what their preference is. When writing about an ethnic or racial group, use the term widely preferred by members of the group. See **ethnic and racial designations**

Disabilities

Refer to the person first and the disability second. Do not use words such as *victim*, *crippled*, *retarded*, etc., and phrases such as “confined to a wheelchair” or “suffers from” when describing people with disabilities.

- o The program is for learning-disabled students. **Better:** The program is for students with learning disabilities.
- o She invented a device for the blind. **Better:** She invented a device to be used by people with blindness (or

vision impairments).

- o She was a cancer victim just 10 years ago but today she enjoys perfect health. **Better:** Twenty years ago, she battled cancer, but today she is in perfect health.

Gender

Avoid gender-specific language—most commonly, the use of a male pronoun. Avoid using a plural pronoun when the antecedent or object is still singular. Recast the sentence or make everything plural, so that plural pronouns can correctly be used. Avoid using both male and female pronouns separated by *or* or a slash.

- o The customer went in search of a mechanic to ask him for advice. **Better:** The customer went in search of a mechanic to ask for advice.
- o If an oceanography student falls overboard, he should use the opportunity to collect specimens. **Better:** If oceanography students fall overboard, they should use the opportunity to collect specimens.
- o If a student falls behind, s/he may seek tutoring. **Better:** Students who fall begin may seek tutoring..

With informal materials, it is acceptable to use the second-person pronoun *you*:

- o You will need to show your ObieID card.
- o You will need to enter your ObieID and password to access the library website.

Avoid gender-based word choices:

Avoid	Prefer
o chairman, chairmen	chair, chairs
o congressman, congresswoman	representative
o policeman	officer
o foreman	supervisor
o fireman	firefighter
o manmade	artificial
o manned	staffed
o manhunt	search
o mankind	people
o freshman	first-year student

biennial happens or is done once every two years

bimonthly event or publication happens or appears every two months

bipartisan

Blackberry

blog (n) short for weblog, an online diary, a personal chronological log of thoughts and or opinions published on a web page

blog (v) to maintain or add content to a blog

blogger one who writes and publishes a blog

Board of Trustees Full formal references to the Oberlin College Board of Trustees are always capitalized: The Oberlin College *Board of Trustees* meets four times a year.

The shortened version, omitting “Oberlin College,” also

is capitalized: The *Board of Trustees* approves the budget.

On second and subsequent references, it is appropriate to use the informal form, *the board*.

References to boards at other institutions or corporations may be lowercased: The Middlebury College *board of trustees*.

References to members' affiliation with Oberlin's board are not capitalized.

- o board members (and all other configurations)
- o the trustees
- o board chair
- o board chair Robert Lemle
- o chair of the board
- o chair of the Board of Trustees
- o board trustee Jane Doe
- o trustee Jane Doe
- o board member Jane Doe

See **capitalization, titles**

book titles Use italics for the titles of books. See **titles of works**.

building and room names, campus see **Campus Building and Room Names Appendix**.

bullets See **Punctuation Appendix**.

B2B - business to business

bylaw

C

cannot

CD, CDs

CD-R

CD-ROM

CD-WR

capital, capitol Capital refers to the city where a seat of government is located. Use lowercase. When used as a financial term, it describes money, equipment, or property used in a business.

Capitol refers to the building in Washington and other buildings that house governments. The meeting was held on *Capitol Hill* in the west wing of the *Capitol*. Follow the same practice when referring to state capitol buildings.

capitalization Avoid the unnecessary use of capital letters. If there is no listing in this style guide for a particular word or phrase, consult a Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, or the most current edition available.

- **Departments, programs, and offices:** Do not capitalize unless using the official, formal name. See **academic departments and programs, administrative offices**.

- **Majors and minors:** Do not capitalize unless they are proper nouns. See **academic disciplines, majors and minors**.

- **Academic and professional titles:** Capitalize when they appear immediately before a name. Lowercase titles when they are used alone or in constructions that set them off from a name by commas. See **titles, academic and professional**.

- **Names of courses:** Capitalize official course titles. Do not use italics or quotation marks. See **course titles**.

campuswide not campus wide or campus-wide

catalog not *catalogue*

century Lowercase, spelling out numbers less than 10: *the first century, the 20th century*

chair A department or committee at Oberlin is headed by *chair*. Not *chairman, chairwoman, or chairperson*.

Chair is used as both a noun and a verb. *Robert Lemle is chair of the Board of Trustees. Professor Jones chaired the meeting.* See **bias-free language**

CIO chief information officer

city names Most city names should be accompanied by their state or country names. However, some domestic and foreign cities are so well known that they can stand alone. They are:

- Atlanta
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland
- Dallas
- Denver
- Detroit
- Honolulu
- Houston
- Indianapolis
- Las Vegas
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- Milwaukee
- Minneapolis
- New Orleans
- New York
- Oklahoma City
- Philadelphia
- Phoenix
- Pittsburgh
- St. Louis
- Salt Lake City
- San Antonio
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Beijing
- Geneva
- Gibraltar
- Guatemala City
- Havana
- Hong Kong
- Jerusalem
- Kuwait
- London
- Luxembourg
- Macao
- Mexico City
- Monaco
- Montreal
- Moscow
- ☉ Ottawa
- Panama City
- Paris
- Quebec
- Rome
- Singapore
- Tokyo
- Toronto
- Vatican City

city Lowercase in all *city of* constructions: *the city of Chicago, the town of Auburn*

Apply the same principal to phrases such as state of Ohio, the states of New York and Michigan. See **state**

city of Oberlin not City of Oberlin

citywide not city wide

classmate, classroom

class year, alumni Use the following form: *John Smith '53, Mary Jones '98*. The year refers to the date when the bachelor's degree was conferred. Be sure to use an apostrophe ('), not an opening single quotation mark (‘) when contracting class years. Do not use the abbreviation OC when listing alumni class years. See **contractions; degrees, academic; formatting;** and the **apostrophe** entry in the **Punctuation Appendix**.

When two people are listed as a couple and only one is a graduate, the class year is listed after the graduate's name: *Joseph and Mary Jones '73. Robert '62 and Maria Smith.*

When two alumni are married, list the class year after each individual's name: *Joseph '87 and Mary Jones '88.*

Some special considerations arise for graduates who earned more than one degree at Oberlin:

Mary Jones '92, MM '94.

For advanced degrees or diplomas only: *John Smith MM '82; Mary Jones PD '92; Jenny Jenkins AD '01.*

Do not use periods in the abbreviations for academic degrees.

Capitalize *class* when used in a *class of* construction: *Class of 2000.*

class year, current students In running text, refer to current students by their class standing, not class year. First-year (not freshman), sophomore, junior, senior. Class year is appropriate in tabular material and bylines. Double-degree students in their final year may be referred to as fifth year students.

clean up (v.), cleanup (n., adj.)

client another word for software application, runs on the desktop or workstation

co- (prefix) The trend in English is away from the use of hyphens in compounds made with the prefix *co*. The Oberlin style is to close up prefixes unless doing so could cause confusion or spellings that could be difficult for readers to decipher. *Some Oberlin students live in co-ops; chickens live in coops.* Below is a list of Oberlin's preferred spellings of some common *co-* compounds. If a word is not listed below, it probably no longer contains a hyphen. Refer to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, or the most recent edition available.

- o co-op (noun, short for cooperative)
- o cochair
- o coauthor
- o coeditor
- o coexist
- o comember
- o cocurate
- o cofound, cofounder
- o cocurricular
- o cosponsor, cosponsored
- o cowrite, cowrote
- o codirect, codirector
- o coinvent, coinventor

College, Oberlin The institution's name, Oberlin College, is always capitalized. On second and subsequent reference, *college* can be used when referring to the entire institution.

The two divisions of Oberlin College are the College of Arts and Sciences and the Conservatory of Music. Always capitalize the divisions' full, formal names. On second and subsequent references, it is proper to use these lower case forms: *college, arts and sciences, and conservatory.* See **institutions, names of.**

colloquium The plural is colloquia.

Commencement Capitalize when referring to the Oberlin College Commencement ceremony.

Commencement/Reunion Weekend

committee Do not capitalize unless part of a formal name.

compared to, compared with Use *compared to* when the intent is to assert, without the need for elaboration, that two or more items are similar: *She compared her work for women's rights to Susan B. Anthony's campaign for women's suffrage.*

Use *compared with* when juxtaposing two or more items to illustrate similarities or differences: *Her time was 2:11:10, compared with 2:14 for her closest competitor.*

complement, compliment *Complement* is a noun and a verb denoting completeness or the process of

supplementing something. The department has a full complement of faculty *members.* *The tablecloths complement the curtains.*

Compliment is a noun or verb that denotes praise or the expression of courtesy. The president complimented the staff. She was pleased by the compliments on her article.

compose, comprise *Compose* means to create or put together. It is used in both the active and passive voices: *She composed a song. The United States is composed of 50 states.*

Comprise means to contain, to include all or embrace all. Better choices include *form, include, and make up;* however, if you use *comprise,* then use it only in the active voice, followed by a direct object: *The United States comprises 50 states.*

composition titles See **musical works, titles of.**

compound adjectives Also known as hyphenated compounds and compound modifiers. See **hyphen** in the **Punctuation Appendix.**

compounds, open An open compound is spelled as two or more words, without hyphens (*high school, lowest common denominator*). Never combine open compounds that are proper nouns (Nobel Prize, United States) to form hyphenated compounds. Incorrect: *Nobel-Prize winning chemist.* Correct: *Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.*

Content Management System (CMS) A computer software system for organizing and facilitating collaborative creation of documents and other content, especially for loading to a website

Conservatory of Music see **Oberlin College**

conference names Capitalize, but do not italicize or use quotation marks for conference names.

contractions In contractions, an apostrophe replaces omitted letters. Some word processors automatically change an apostrophe (') at the beginning of a word to an opening single quotation mark (‘), be sure to correct these.

- o Mary Jones '98 majored in chemistry. (not Mary Jones '98)
- o 'tis (*not* 'tis)
- o dos and don'ts
- o rock 'n' roll (not rock 'n' roll)

See **class years, alumni, formatting,** and the apostrophe entry in the **Punctuation Appendix.**

Convocation, Convocation Series

co-op

cost-effective (both preceding and following the noun)

This is cost-effective method. This method is cost-effective.

course load

course titles Capitalize course names. She was enrolled in Literature and Politics of Central America. If the title of a course could be confused with a discipline, recast the sentence so the distinction is clear. Correct: *She is taking Professor Smith's new class, Neuropharmacology.* Incorrect: *She is studying Nueropharmacology.* See **capitalization**.

coursework

courtesy titles In most editorial material, do not use the courtesy titles Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. In the first reference to an individual, use the person's complete name, and title if appropriate. On second and subsequent references in most instances, use the person's last name only.

In salutations, formal contexts, and first-person essays, such as the President's Desk column in the *Source*, the use of courtesy titles is permitted.

Oberlin style generally reserves the use of the title *Dr.* for medical doctors only. See **honorific titles, names of people, titles, academic and professional**.

Creativity & Leadership Project the ampersand is an official part of this program's name.

criterion, criteria Criterion is singular; criteria is plural: A decision can be based on a single *criterion* or on several *criteria*.

cross country do not hyphenate, even when used as an adjective. *The cross country team won the championship.*

crossover

cross-reference

current-use funding

cut off (v.), **cutoff** (n., adj.)

cyber- close compound when used with other words: cyberspace, cyberstation, cybercafé, etc.

D

data A plural noun, it normally takes plural verbs and pronouns. However, Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary notes that while it is a plural noun, it can be singular or plural in construction. As an abstract mass noun (like information), *data* takes a singular verb and singular modifiers (as this, much, little), and is referred to by a singular pronoun (it). Both constructions are standard.

database

dates Always use Arabic figures, without *st*, *nd*, *rd*, or *th* (July 8, not July 8th).

Separate years from month and day with commas. *They married January 15, 1988, in Oberlin.*

Use commas when including the day *She was born Tuesday, September 14, at 7:17 p.m.*, but not with month and year only, *January 1988*.

Do not abbreviate names of days or months in running text.

Avoid using a dash with *from* or *between*. Incorrect: *The symposium takes place from March 30-April 2.* Correct: *The symposium takes place from March 30 to April 2.* Correct: *The symposium takes place March 30-April 2.*

It is not necessary to repeat the month in citing a range of dates. *May 7-14.*

See months, numbers.

days Do not abbreviate days of the week except when necessary in lists or charts.

When necessary, use the following abbreviations: *Mon*, *Tue*, *Wed*, *Thu*, *Fri*, *Sat*, *Sun*. The three-letter format without periods facilitates placement in tabular material.

decades Use Arabic figures to indicate decades. Use an apostrophe (option-shift-right bracket on a Macintosh computer) to indicate that numerals are left out. Show plurals by adding the letter *s*, without an apostrophe: *the 1890s*, *the '90s*, *the mid-1930s*. See **formatting**, **contractions**

degrees, academic Capitalize the names and abbreviations of academic degrees whether they follow

personal names or stand by themselves. Do not use periods in the abbreviations. (*John Doe, Doctor of Law; Mary Smith, DEng ; She recently earned a PhD.*)

Do not use degree designations with names unless the degrees are relevant to the story.

Refer to it as *a* bachelor's, *a* master's, *a* doctoral degree; or *an* associate degree, not *his* or *her* associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree.

The plural form of a degree is the same as the singular: *They have master's degrees.*

Oberlin style is to use the phrase *earned a degree at*, and not *received a degree from*.

Oberlin style reserves the honorary title Dr. for medical doctors; the title is generally not used for someone who holds a PhD degree.

Oberlin currently awards the following degrees:

- o Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- o Bachelor of Music (BMus)
- o Performance Diploma (PD)
- o Master of Music Teaching (MMT)
- o Master of Music (MM)
- o Artist Diploma (AD)

In the past, Oberlin has awarded the following degrees:

- o Master of Music Education (MME)
- o Master of Arts (MA) offered in art history, sociology, and in the Graduate School of Theology
- o Master of Education (MEd)
- o Master of Sacred Theology (STM)

For more than one degree: *Mary Jones '92, MM '94.*

For advanced degrees or diplomas only: *John Smith MM '82; Mary Jones MEd '09; Jenny Jenkins AD '01.*

degrees, honorary Use the following style: *John Doe, hon. '02; Jane Smith '85, hon. '02*, Do not use *Dr.* before the name of an individual whose only doctorate is honorary. See **courtesy titles**

degrees, temperature see **temperature**

departments and programs See **academic departments and programs.**

diacritical marks see **formatting**

dial-up (adj.)

different takes the preposition *from*, not *than*.

digital

digitize (v) - (used with object) to convert (data) to digital form for use in a computer.

dimensions Use numerals and spell out inches, feet,

yards, etc., to indicate depth, height, length, and width in running text. Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns. *The rug is 9 feet by 12 feet. The 9-by-12 foot rug.*

In notes and tabular material, it is appropriate to use the symbols for inches (") and feet ('). Be sure not to use typographer's quotes. See **formatting**.

diminutives See **nicknames**

directions, regions In general, lowercase *north, south, northeast, northern*, etc., when they indicate compass directions; capitalize these words when they designate regions. If uncertain whether to capitalize, do not.

Some examples:

COMPASS DIRECTIONS: *He drove west. The cold front is moving east.*

REGIONS: *Oberlin College is in northeast Ohio.*

A storm system that developed in the Midwest is spreading eastward. It will bring showers to the East Coast by morning and to the entire Northeast by late in the day. High temperatures will prevail throughout the Western states.

The North was victorious. The South will rise again. Settlers from the East went West in search of new lives. The customs of the East are different from those of the West. The Northeast depends on the Midwest for its food supply.

She has a Southern accent. He is a Northerner.

The storm developed in the South Pacific. European leaders met to talk about supplies of oil from Southeast Asia.

WITH NAMES OF NATIONS: Lowercase unless they are part of a proper name or are used to designate a politically divided nation: *northern France, eastern Canada, the western United States.*

But: *Northern Ireland, South Korea.*

WITH STATES AND CITIES: The preferred form is to lowercase compass points only when they describe a section of a state or city: *western Texas, southern Atlanta.*

But capitalize compass points:

- When part of a proper name: *North Dakota, West Virginia.*
- When used in denoting widely known sections: *Southern California, the South Side of Chicago, the Lower East Side of New York.* If in doubt, use lowercase.

IN FORMING PROPER NAMES: When combining with another common noun to form the name for a region or location: *the North Woods, the South Pole, the Far East,*

the Middle East, the West Coast (the entire region, not the coastline itself), *the Eastern Shore, the Western Hemisphere*.

disc, disk Disc is used except for computer-related references: *laserdisc, videodisc*, but *hard disk*.

divisions of Oberlin College See **College, Oberlin**

divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences
the College of Arts and Sciences has three divisions, the full formal names of which are capitalized

- o Arts and Humanities Division
- o Social and Behavioral Sciences Division
- o Natural Sciences and Mathematics Divisions

Correct: The chemistry department is part of the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Division.

Correct: Anthropology is one of the social and behavioral sciences.

divisions of the Conservatory of Music the Conservatory of Music has nine divisions, the full formal names of which are capitalized

- o Division of Conducting and Ensembles
- o Division of Contemporary Music
- o Division of Keyboard Studies
- o Division of Music Education
- o Division of Music Theory
- o Division of Musicology
- o Division of Strings
- o Division of Vocal Studies
- o Division of Woodwinds, Brass, and Percussion

The Division of Music Education offers the Master's of Music Teaching degree.

Oberlin Opera Theater is part of the vocal studies division.

Division III See **North Coast Athletic Conference**

dorm, dormitory Oberlin College's student housing buildings are called *residence halls* and should be referred to as such. However, it is acceptable to sparingly use *dorm* (not *dormitory*) as a synonym for *residence hall*.

Double Degree Program Do not hyphenate in headlines or on first reference.

double-degree program In running text on second and subsequent reference, it is acceptable to lowercase the full formal name of this

program. *Students in the double-degree program earn both the BA and the BMus degrees.*

double-degree student

dot-com refers to Internet-based companies

double-click

dot-org refers to nonprofit organizations that may be virtual organizations

download (n) to receive a file. *Subscribers may get a free download once they register.*

download (v) to receive a file. *Download this file to your computer.*

drag-and-drop jargon. Use *move* or *place and item* instead.

DVD The plural is *DVDs*. (*aka digital versatile disc*)

DVD-R, DVD-WR, DVD-RAM, DVD+RW

DNS domain system name, domain name service

DTP (n. adj.) desktop publishing

dynamic parts of a webpage that appear or require action only on demand.

E

e- always hyphenate when used as a prefix meaning "electronic" or "on the Internet"

each Takes a singular verb.

each other, one another Two people look at *each other*.

More than two look at *one another*.

Either phrase may be used when the number is indefinite: *We help each other. We help one another.*

Earth, earth When used as the proper name of our planet, *Earth* is capitalized and *the* is usually omitted.

- The astronauts have returned successfully to Earth.
- Mars, unlike Earth, has no atmosphere.

In informal contexts and in idioms, *earth* is lowercased.

- Some still believe the earth is flat.
- Where on earth have you been? OK
- Seventh Generation makes earth-friendly products.

e-book an electronic book; book available on the web

e-commerce refers to business conducted online, on the web

editor's notes Identify the text as editor's note by preceding it with the phrase *Ed. note* followed by a colon. Italicize the note.

Example: Ed. note: The author stands by the validity of his research.

In running text, use brackets indicate information or text is that of or by the editor.

Example: "They misunderestimate [sic] me," said President George W. Bush.

effect/affect See **affect/effect**.

ellipsis See **Punctuation Appendix**.

e-mail (n) Do not omit hyphen. Capitalize at the beginning of a sentence and in tabular text. There is no verb form.

Correct: For more information, send an e-mail to jane.doe@school.edu.

Incorrect: E-mail Jane for more information.

e-mail addresses In running text, e-mail addresses should be set in Roman type. Sentences ending with an e-mail address should close with a period.

Example: He welcomes correspondence and can be reached at firstname.lastname@domain.com.

emeritus/emerita Place emeritus (or emerita for feminine) before the formal title. *Emeritus Professor of Geology John Doe; Mary Smith, emerita professor of art.*

endowed chairs and directorships Endowed chairs and directorships are always capitalized.

See **named professorships**.

- Andrew '42 and Pauline Delaney Chair of Teacher Education
- Azariah Smith Root Director of Libraries
- Delta Lodge Director of Athletics
- Donald R. Longman Chair in English

- Francis W. and Lydia L. Davis Chair in Religion
- James R. Clark Chair in Mathematics

The Office of Stewardship and Public Programs has a complete list of endowed chairs, endowed directorships, and named professorships on its webpage http://www2.oberlin.edu/giving/spp_prof.html

ensure, insure Use *ensure* to mean guarantee. *The staff worked to ensure accuracy.*

Use *insure* for references to insurance: *The policy insures his life.*

entitled Use it to mean a right to do or have something. Do not use it to mean titled.

- Correct: She was entitled to the promotion.
- Incorrect: The book was entitled *Gone with the Wind*.

e-publication refers to electronic publications, especially newsletters and magazines often produced exclusively online

eras: Use CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before the Common Era), which are more inclusive than AD and BC. CE (like AD) always precedes the year: *CE 500*.

ethnic and racial designations When national-origin identifiers are necessary in a text, Oberlin preference is to follow the wishes of the person being described. If no preference is given, use the following ethnic designations:

- African American—referring to an American person of African descent. If a person is not American, use *black* as the designation.
- Asian American—referring to an American person of Asian descent.
- Latino/Latina—not Hispanic.
- Native American—not American Indian. When possible, use the national affiliation (Hopi, Navajo, etc.)

Do not hyphenate these forms when they are used as adjectives: *African American studies*.

To specify that someone was born in the United States but is not Native American, use the phrase *native born*.

Do not capitalize *black* and *white* when used as racial designations.

See **bias-free language**

every day (adv.), everyday (adj.) *She goes to work every day. The book highlights the joys of everyday life.*

everybody, everyone Everybody and everyone

take singular verbs. However, *they* or *their* are both acceptable second references. *Everyone remembered to return their library books.*

every one, everyone Use two words when the meaning is individual objects: *Every one of the books was ruined.*

Use one word when used as a pronoun meaning all persons: *Everyone wants to eat lunch.*

exhibit, exhibition Use *exhibit* as a verb, *exhibition* as a noun. *She exhibited paintings in the museum's Local Artists Exhibition.*

Titles of exhibitions and works of art should be italicized. See **titles of works**.

Experimental College (ExCo) This is a student-run organization that offers for-credit courses taught by students, faculty members, and townspeople throughout the year.

extension numbers See **telephone numbers**.

F

Facebook online social networking utility

face-off

faculty rank Include designations of faculty rank with faculty members' names when they appear in formal, running text.

faculty, staff Each refers to a group of people and each may take singular or plural verbs depending on context. Treat them as singular when writing of the entity acting together as a single body:

- The faculty supports the new requirements.
- The staff will attend the department retreat at the Oberlin Inn.

Treat them as plural when speaking of them as individuals taking various actions, or as part of the whole:

- Some staff were sent home with stomach flu.
- A dozen faculty participated in the presidential debate

fall semester do not capitalize

FAQ (jargon) a list of frequently asked questions usually posted on a newsgroup or website to provide additional information on a given topic

farther, further Use *farther* to indicate physical distance: *He walked farther into the woods.*

Further refers to an extension of time or degree: *She will look further into the matter.*

fax (n.)

fellow, fellowship Lowercase unless used with proper names. *He studied in Europe as a Thomas J. Watson Fellow. He is a Watson fellow. She applied for a fellowship from the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship Program.*

fewer, less Use fewer when referring to objects that can be counted: *We have fewer than 3,000 students this year.*

Use less for indicating bulk or quantity: *I had less than \$50 in my wallet. They gave less than their best.*

first come, first served *Tickets are available first come, first served.* But hyphenate if used as an adjective: *We will admit patrons on a first-come, first-served basis.*

first-year (n., adj.) Oberlin style is to use *first-year student* or *first-year* on second and subsequent references. See **bias-free language**

first year *This is her first year at Oberlin.*

Flash (adj.) when used as trademark of Macromedia: Flash technology, Flash player; program that allows designers to create files that have sound, graphics, and animation over the web.

foreign student Use *international student*. See **bias-free language**

foreign words and phrases Foreign words and phrases familiar to most readers and listed in Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary are not italicized if used in an English context; they should be spelled as in Webster's (summa cum laude, roman à clef, a priori). German nouns, if in Webster's, are lowercased (weltanschauung).

Use italics for isolated words and phrases in a foreign language that are likely to be unfamiliar to readers. *Honi sovit qui mal y pense* is the motto of the Order of the Garter.

If a familiar foreign term, such as *mise en scène*, should occur in the same context as a less familiar one, such as *mise en abyme* (not listed in Webster's), either both or

neither should be italicized, so as to maintain internal consistency.

formatting In general, and especially for material that is to be printed, keep formatting to a minimum. Here are a few general guidelines:

- Space between sentences: Use one space, not two, between sentences.
- Italics vs. underlining: Use italics, not underlining, for words that are to be italicized in the printed version.
- Typographer's Quotes: Use typographer's quotes (also known as smart or curly quotes), except in measurements. Correct: *She is 5' 6" tall.* Incorrect: *He is 6' 2" tall.* Most word processing software programs can be programmed always to use typographer's quotes—in Microsoft Word, see AutoFormat under the Format menu.
- Special characters: most word processing software programs include special characters—in Microsoft Word, see Symbol under the Insert menu. Also, most word processing software programs can be programmed always to use some special characters—in Microsoft Word, see AutoFormat under the Format menu. Here are keystrokes for some commonly used characters:

• Keystrokes, Diacritical marks

è (accent grave)	option `
é (accent acute)	option e
î (circumflex)	option i
ü (umlaut)	option u
ñ (tilde)	option n

• Keystrokes, Miscellaneous characters

— (em dash)	option + shift -
- (en dash)	option -

• Keystrokes, Typographers quotes: Auto formatting to obtain typographer's quotes is easier than typing special characters each time you need one—see the entry on typographer's quotes, above. Typographer's quotes can also be found on Microsoft Word's Symbol menu—see the entry on special characters, above.

' (apostrophe)	option + shift]
“ (open quotation mark)	option [
‘ (open single quotation mark)	option]
” (closing quotation mark)	option + shift [

fractions In running text, spell out amounts less than 1, using hyphens between the words: *one-half, two-thirds*. Use figures for precise amounts larger than 1, converting to decimals whenever practical.

freelance, freelancer

freshman, freshmen Oberlin style is to use the term *first-year student*. See **bias-free language**

front end, front-end (n., adj.)

FTP file transfer protocol, way to transmit files from one computer to another

full time (n.) , **full-time** (adj.) He works full time. He has a full-time job in the library.

fundraising (n.) , **fundraising** (adj.) Oberlin style is one word for all forms of fundraising.

Noun: *Fundraising is a challenge for nonprofit organizations.*

Adjective: *Oberlin launched a fundraising campaign in December.*

fundraiser A person who engages in fundraising is a *fundraiser*.

Joe is a fundraiser for Oberlin College. The office hired a fundraiser.

G

gateway a system that provides access

gender-neutral language See **bias-free language**

Generation X refers to persons born from 1961 to 1980

get-together

gigabyte, GB

giveaway (n.)

Google (n.) avoid the slang, verb usage: *Let's Google her.*

GPA Use this abbreviation for grade point average; do not use periods. Use figures to at least one decimal point: 3.0, 2.8, 3.75.

graduate (v.) Graduate is used in the active voice: *She graduated from the university.* The passive voice (*was graduated from*) is correct, but not necessary.

Do not, however, drop from: *John Adams graduated from Harvard.*

green Do not capitalize or use quotes when *green* is used to mean environmentally sound.

Incorrect: *In the last 10 years, "green" architecture has become more common, and green buildings have appeared in many areas.*

Correct: *Oberlin's Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies is a fine example of green architecture.*

groundbreaking

H

handheld, handmade

hardcopy

health care Always two words. Do not hyphenate when used as an adjective.

high school Always two words. Do not hyphenate when used as an adjective. Correct: *She is a high school student.* Incorrect: *He is a high-school teacher.*

high-tech (adj.) also hi-tech

his, her Although the pronoun *his* has historically been the English language's gender-neutral pronoun, it no longer is an appropriate substitute for an indefinite antecedent that may be male or female:

- o A good student identifies his sources.

Constructions that include such phrases as *his or her* or

his/her also are to be avoided. In general, it's best to avoid these situations by simply rephrasing the sentence:

- o Good students identify their sources.

See **bias-free language**

hit often refers to traffic or visits to a website but also refers to total number of files downloaded or accessed

Homecoming

homepage the front page, start page, landing page or first page of a website. It is usually the URL or local file that automatically loads when a web browser starts (**Homepage as one word is not yet widely used but it is Oberlin's preferred style*)

hometown (n.), **home-town** (adj.) *Oberlin is my hometown. I love the home-town atmosphere in Oberlin.*

Honor Code Capitalize when referring to Oberlin's Honor Code. *Oberlin's Honor Code has been in place since 1909 to ensure that students uphold the highest standard of academic integrity on exams and assignments.*

titles, honorific Honorific titles and terms of respect are capitalized.

- o the Reverend Peter John Gomes
- o the First Lady
- o the Queen Mother
- o Mahatma Gandhi
- o Her (His, Your) Majesty; His (Her, Your) Royal Highness; Your (Her, His) Excellency
- o Mr. President
- o Madam Speaker
- o Your Honor

see **courtesy titles; titles, academic and professional**

hopefully It means in a hopeful manner. Do not use it to mean it is hoped, let us hope, or we hope.

Correct: *We hope to complete our work in June. It is hoped that we will complete our work in June.*

Incorrect: *Hopefully, we will complete our work in June.*

hours See **times**.

HTTP Hypertext Markup Language

http:// lowercase, use for web addresses

https:// lowercase, use for secured web addresses

hyper closed compound (hypertext, hyperlink, hyperware)

hyphen See **Punctuation Appendix**.

I

Illumination Night, Illumination capitalize when referring to Oberlin's annual Commencement/Reunion Weekend event

impact This word is a noun. Do not use as a verb; use affect or influence instead.

Correct: *His decision had a great impact.*

Incorrect: *His decision impacted their lives.*

imply, infer Writers or speakers *imply* in the words they use.

A listener or reader *infers* something from the words.

inasmuch, insofar, insomuch

inhouse

initials There is no space between them in a name: *J.S. Bach*.

in order to This phrase is never necessary.

Incorrect: *In order to run a meeting efficiently, set an agenda.*

Correct: *To run a meeting efficiently, set an agenda.*

instant message (IM) real-time communication between computers over a network

institutions, names of see **names of institutions**.

insure See **ensure, insure**.

international student Use instead of foreign student.

Internet Do not use as a synonym for the web. The Internet is a decentralized global information network that connects countless computers; supports communications using Transmission

Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP); and provides, uses, or makes accessible publicly or privately held high level services layered on the communications and related infrastructure described above.

Intranet

IP Internet protocol

IP address Internet protocol address

ISP Internet Service Provider

IT information technology

italics see **titles of works; words as words**.

its, it's *Its* is a possessive pronoun. Like the other possessive pronouns (his, her, our, your, yours, their, theirs), *its* has no apostrophe.

It's is the contraction for *it is* and *it has*. *It's up to you.*
It's been a long time.

J

Java, Javascript

judgment Not judgement.

junior, senior, III, IV Use no comma between the name and these terms. Abbreviate as *Jr.* and *Sr.* only with full names of persons. *Harry Jones Jr., William Smith III*. See **names of people**.

K

keyboarding see **formatting**

kudos It means credit or praise for an achievement. The word is singular and takes singular verbs.

kickoff (n. and adj.), **kick off** (v.)

L

laptop (n.), (adj.)

lady Use *woman* when referring to a female 18 years old or older. See **bias-free language**

Latin@ means Latino/a

Latino/Latina See **ethnic and racial designations, bias-free language**

lay, lie The action word is *lay*. It takes a direct object. *Laid* is the form for its past tense and its past participle. Its present participle is *laying*.

Lie indicates a state of reclining along a horizontal plane. It does not take a direct object. Its past tense is *lay*. Its past participle is *lain*. Its present participle is *lying*.

When *lie* means to make an untrue statement, the verb forms are *lie, lied, lying*.

LEED Acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a green building rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. Spell out on first reference.

lecture titles Capitalize, set in Roman type, and enclose in quotation marks. See **titles of works**.

less See **fewer, less**.

letter winner

libraries Oberlin has four libraries. Only the art library has a formal name that should be capitalized.

main library (also known as Mudd library or Mudd in reference to the building in which it is housed, the Seeley G. Mudd Learning Center)

Clarence Ward Art Library, art library

conservatory library

science library

lie See **lay, lie**.

lifelong (adj.)

lifestyle (n.)

line up (v.), **lineup** (n., adj.)

LISTSERV Capitalize when referring to L-Soft, the trademark company that has the list management software; use *e-mail list* or *electronic mailing list* when referring to generic mailing lists or other software mailing list management program

login, logon (n.) Her login password is Ruby.

log in, log on, log off (v.) *Log on to the website by visiting www.oberlin.edu* . Incorrect: log onto ...

long term, long-term *She is in it for the long term. He signed a long-term lease.*

long time, longtime *They have know each other a long time. They are longtime partners.*

long-standing

M

magazine Capitalize and italicize the names of magazines. If the word *magazine* does not appear in the official title, do not capitalize or italicize it. See **titles of works**.

majors and minors Do not capitalize unless they are proper nouns. *John is an art major. A double-degree student, Sally majored in violin*

performance and English. Herbert majored in Hispanic studies. See **academic disciplines, capitalization.**

man-hour, man-made, manpower

master's degree See **degrees, academic.**

measurements see **dimensions**

media, medium Media is the preferred plural form of medium; it should be used with a plural verb. *The media are always under scrutiny.*

midnight Not 12 midnight. Do not use 12 a.m. as a synonym. Midnight is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning. See **time of day.**

Millennials refers to persons born from 1981 to 2002

mixed media (n.)

mixed-media (adj.) a mixed-media show

money Use figures in references to money: \$9.50, \$1,300, \$20,000, \$3 million, \$1.5 billion.

A dollar total with no cents expressed is usually set without the decimal point and zeros: *Admission is \$3 on Saturdays.*

monthlong

months Capitalize the names of months in all uses. Preferred use is to spell out the month's full name in all but tabular material.

When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day, and year, set off the year with commas.

Examples: *January 1972 was a cold month. His birthday is May 8. The target date is February 14, 2005.*

In tabular material, these three-letter forms without a periods may be used: *Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.*

see **dates, numbers**

more than, over *More than* expresses quantity: *More than 100 applicants were interviewed.*

Over is an adverb expressing direction: *We drove over the bridge.*

mouseover (jargon)

MP3 file extension for a file compressed by the MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 standard; way to transmit music over the Internet

multi- (prefix) The trend in English is away from the use of hyphens in compounds made with the prefix *multi*. The Oberlin style is to close up prefixes unless doing so could cause confusion or spellings that could be difficult for readers to decipher. *Examples:* multicultural, multidisciplinary, multipartial, multiracial, multimedia, multimillion

musical works, titles of

• **Instrumental works:** Many instrumental works are known by their generic names—*symphony, quartet, nocturne*, and so on—and often a number or key or both. Such names are capitalized but not italicized. A descriptive title, however, is usually italicized if referring to a full work; set in roman and in quotation marks if referring to a section of a work.

- Air with Variations (“The Harmonious Blacksmith”) from Handel’s Suite No. 5 in E
- Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra
- The second movement, Allegro appassionato, from Brahms’s Second Piano Concerto
- Mozart’s Symphony No. 41 in C Major; the *Jupiter Symphony*

• **Opus, Number, Catalog Number:** The abbreviations *No.* (number; plural *Nos.*) and *Op.* (opus; plural *Opp.*) are set in roman and uppercased.

An abbreviation designating a catalog of a particular composer’s works is always capitalized, e.g., BWV [Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis]; D. [Deutsch] for Schubert; K. [Köchel] for Mozart).

- Sonata in E-flat, Op. 31, No. 3
- Fantasy in C Minor, K. 475

When *op.* or a catalog number is used restrictively, no comma precedes it.

- Sonata Op. 31
- Fantasy K. 475

• **Operas, songs:** Titles of operas, oratorios, tone poems, song cycles, and other long musical compositions are italicized. Titles of songs are set in roman and enclosed in quotation marks, capitalized in the same way as poems

- Handel’s *Messiah*
- “La vendetta, oh, la vendetta” from *The Marriage of Figaro*
- the “Anvil Chorus” from Verdi’s *Il Trovatore*
- Arthur Sullivan’s song cycle, *The Song of the Wrens*, is a setting of poems by Tennyson.

see **titles of works**

N

named professorships Named professorships are always capitalized. See **endowed chairs and directorships**

- o Andrew '42 and Pauline Delaney Professor of Mathematics
- o Environmental Studies Endowed Professorship
- o Danforth Foundation Professor of Religion
- o David H. and Margaret W. Barker Professor of Natural Sciences
- o Donald R. Longman Professor of English
- o Donald R. Longman Professor of Natural Science
- o Donald R. Longman Professor (biology/chemistry)
- o Eric and Jane Nord Professorship
- o Eva and John Young-Hunter Professor of Art
- o Francis D. Federighi Professor of Natural Science
- o Frederick B. Artz Professor of History
- o Irvin E. Houck Professor in the Humanities
- o James Monroe Professor of Politics and International Law
- o John Charles Reid Professor of Rhetoric and Composition
- o John G.W. Cowles Director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum
- o Mildred C. Jay Professor of Art
- o Nathan A. Greenberg Professor of Classics
- o NEA Conservatory Challenge Professor
- o Norman D. Henderson Professor of Psychology
- o Pauline M. Delaney Professor of Creative Writing and Literature
- o Robert W. and Eleanor H. Biggs Professor of Natural Science
- o Robert S. Danforth Professor of Biology
- o Robert S. Danforth Professor of History
- o Robert S. Danforth Professor of Politics
- o Robert S. Danforth/Ben W. Lewis Professor of Economics
- o Robert W. Wheeler Professorship (performance/conservatory)
- o Ruberta T. McCandless Professor of French
- o Ruth Strickland Gardner Professor (conservatory)
- o William G. and Jeanette Williams Smith Professor of Social Sciences

The Office of Stewardship and Public Programs has a complete list of endowed chairs, endowed directorships, and named professorships on its webpage http://www2.oberlin.edu/giving/spp_prof.html

names of countries Spell out in running text. Abbreviations, using periods, may be used in the adjectival form and in lists and tabular material. Refer to the CIA's online [World Factbook](#) for conventional long and short forms of countries' names. Examples:

- o United States of America, United States, U.S., U.S.A.
- o People's Republic of China, China, P.R.C.
- o United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, U.K.

names of institutions Names of institutions (the University of Sydney, the Cleveland Orchestra) are proper nouns and require capitals. The article *the* at the start of an institution's name is not normally capitalized, even if the institution uses the capital in its own media.

- o Incorrect: He earned a degree at The Ohio State University.
- o Correct: He earned a degree at the Ohio State University.

Generic words for institutions (university, college, orchestra, foundation, hospital, high school) do not need capitals:

- o Incorrect (generic): The University offers programs in arts and sciences.
- o Correct (generic): The university offers ...

See **College, Oberlin**

names of people Use the name a person prefers and follow these guidelines:

Use a person's full preferred name, including middle name or initial if the person so desires, on first reference. For guidelines concerning non-English names when a person's preference is not known, refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition.

Use Jr., II, III, etc. only with the person's complete name. Do not precede the generational suffix with a comma. Correct: *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Use a woman's first name, rather than her husband's, when known. Example: *Instead of Mr. and Mrs. John Smith, use John and Mary Smith.*

Include a maiden name if a woman prefers that usage.

Use hyphens only when a hyphenated name is preferred (*Mary Martin-Smith*).

Include the maiden name in alumni publications if it is known.

In most editorial material, use only last names on second and subsequent references. Do not precede with courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc.) except in personal correspondence or first-person essays. Subsequent references by first name are acceptable in alumni publication class notes and the *Source*.

See **class years, courtesy titles, nicknames**.

National Collegiate Athletic Association spell out on first reference, followed by abbreviation in parentheses. *The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a voluntary organization through which the nation's colleges and universities govern their athletics programs.* On second and subsequent references, *NCAA* and *the association* are acceptable.

NCAA see **National Collegiate Athletic Association**

NCAC see **North Coast Athletic Conference**

the 'Net jargon. Use *Internet*, or *the Internet* instead.

new media often refers to non-printed media; different forms of electronic media made possible through use of computer technology

newspaper names The name of a newspaper is capitalized, except for a preceding *the*, and italicized. For a full listing of dailies, see onlinenewspapers.com.

Correct: *President Krislov reads the New York Times every day.*

Incorrect: *Scott reads The Plain Dealer.*

See **titles of works**.

nicknames If an unfamiliar nickname is used following a person's first name, place it in quotation marks. On second and subsequent reference, if writing for a publication that uses first names rather than last, it is permissible to use the nickname without quotation marks. *Joseph "Shorty" Smith graduated in 2000. Shorty went on to earn at PhD at Harvard.*

Familiar nicknames used in place of first names are not placed in quotation marks: *Babe Ruth is a famous baseball player.*

Diminutives—such familiar, shortened forms of first names as Greg for Gregory, Bob for Robert, Marci for Marcella, Jenny for Jennifer—need no special treatment, especially if a person is widely known by the diminutive. If the possibility of confusion on the part of the reader exists, follow these guidelines:

The first time a person's name appears in an article or story, put the diminutive in parentheses between the first and last name. *Richard (Dick) Jones graduated in 1998. Lucinda (Cindy) Smith majored in English.*

On second and subsequent reference in publications that permit the use of first names use the diminutive: *Dick joined the Peace Corps one year later. Cindy teaches composition classes in a local high school.*

See **names of people**.

non- (prefix) The trend in English is away from the use of hyphens in compounds made with the prefix *non*. The Oberlin style is to close up prefixes unless doing so could cause confusion or spellings that could be difficult for readers to

decipher. Refer to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, or the most recent edition available.

nonprofit, not-for-profit the terms *nonprofit* and *not-for-profit* are generally used interchangeably. Preferred Oberlin usage is *nonprofit*. Do not hyphenate. Incorrect: *non-profit*.

none Technically singular in meaning, it would seem appropriate that *none* should always take a singular verb and pronoun. In practice, this often would result in text that sounds pedantic. Most style guides advise flexibility.

When *none* is used in the sense of "not one," treat it as singular: *All three schools have excellent health records, though none has a school nurse.* Here, the singular idea predominates.

When *none* is followed by a singular noun, it takes a singular verb: *None of the food was fresh.*

When the sense of *none* is "not any" or "no two," treat it as a plural: *None of the actors are receiving pay for their services.*

noon Not 12 noon. Do not use 12 p.m. as a synonym. See **time of day**.

North Coast Athletic Conference Oberlin is a charter member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC). On first reference in running text, spell out the full name, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses: *Oberlin is a member of the North Coast Athletic College (NCAC).* On second and subsequent reference, both NCAC and the conference are acceptable.

Other members of the NCAC are Allegheny College, Denison University, Earlham College, Hiram College, Kenyon College, Ohio Wesleyan University, Wabash College, Wittenberg University, and the College of Wooster.

not only This should be followed with *but also*: *It would not only be unwieldy but also unworkable.*

numbers Spell out zero through nine and first through ninth, and use numerals for higher numbers, even when this means mixing words and numerals in the same sentence, paragraph, or story. *the third person, the 21st century, ninth-grade teacher.*

Follow the same rule for round numbers in the millions and billions: *eight billion people, 11 million people.*

When numbers are not round, use decimals: *2.5 million people*

Always use numerals in scores, court decisions, and legislative votes: *a 5-4 victory, a Senate vote of 64-36.*

- **Large Numbers:** When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in *y* to another word. Do not use commas between other separate words that are part of one number: *twenty; thirty-one; one hundred thirty-three; one million two hundred seventy-six thousand five hundred eighty-seven.*

When figures are used for numbers greater 999, use a comma to separate the thousands digit from the hundreds digit: *1,985; 10,279; 1,999, 999.*

- **Numbers at the Beginning of a Sentence:** Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. If necessary, recast the sentence. There is one exception—a numeral that identifies a calendar year.

- Incorrect: 435 first-year students entered Oberlin last year.
- Correct: Last year 435 first-year students entered Oberlin.
- Correct: 2001 was a very good year for admissions.

- **Numbers in Headlines**

- **Casual Uses:** Spell out casual expressions. *Thanks a million. He walked a quarter of a mile. A thousand times no!*

See **addresses, age, century, dates, decades, dimension, eras, fractions, money, percent, telephone numbers, time of day, time periods, time sequences.**

O

Oberlin College It is acceptable to use *the college* on the second reference when referring to the entire institution or to the College of Arts and Sciences. See **College, Oberlin.**

Oberlin OnCampus The formal name of Oberlin's on-campus webpage.

offices See **administrative offices.**

offline

one another See **each other, one another.**

ongoing

on campus, on-campus (n., adj.) The performance will be on campus in Hall Auditorium. The *Review* is the college's on-campus newspaper.

online (adv., adj.) A term referring to locations on or use of the Internet.

The term also refers to a specific location or webpage: *Our sales catalogs are available online at www.cataloge.org.*

Or to personal activity: *I went online to find the information you wanted.*

Or to a computerized format: *Please use the online form to complete the survey.*

online community refers to the entire group of web users of a given website, blog, chat room, etc.

over See **more than, over.**

overall

P

PC personal computer

PDA portable document assistant

PDF, pdf portable document format

Parents and Family Weekend

password

people, persons Use *person* when speaking of an individual: *One person waited for the bus.*

The word *people* is preferred to *persons* in all plural uses: *Thousands of people attended the state fair. There were 17 people in the room.*

Persons should be used only when it is in a direct quote or is part of a title as in *Bureau of Missing Persons.*

People is also a collective noun that takes a plural verb when used to refer to a single race or nation: *The*

American people are united. In this sense, the plural is *peoples*: *The peoples of Africa speak many languages.*

percent One word. It takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an *of* construction: *The teacher said that 60 percent was a failing grade. He said 50 percent of the membership was there.*

It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an *of* construction: *He said 50 percent of the members were there.*

Spell out the word in running text and use the percent sign (%) in scientific and statistical copy.

percentages Use figures: *1 percent, 2.5 percent* (use decimals, not fractions), *10 percent*.

For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero: *The cost of living rose 0.6 percent.*

Repeat *percent* with each individual figure: *He said 10 percent to 30 percent of the electorate may not vote.*

PhD, PhDs The preferred form is to say a person *holds a doctorate* and name the individual's area of specialty. The form *PhD degree(s)* is also acceptable. Oberlin style generally reserves the use of the honorary title *Dr.* for medical doctors.

plurals, Latin Listed here are the singular and plural forms of some commonly used Latin phrases. If a word does not appear below, refer to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, for usage.

SINGULAR

- o addendum
- o analysis
- o colloquium
- o consortium
- o criterion
- o datum
- o medium
- o millennium
- o phenomenon
- o syllabus
- o symposium
- o thesis

PLURAL

- addenda
- analyses
- colloquia
- consortia
- criteria
- data
- media
- millennia
- phenomena
- syllabi
- symposia
- theses

p.m., a.m. In running text, time designations are lowercase and punctuated with periods. Avoid the redundant *10 a.m. this morning*. In tabular material and advertisements, small caps without periods are acceptable. *11 AM, 10 PM*. See **time of day**.

possessives Follow these guidelines. For questions not addressed here, consult the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

- Plural Nouns not Ending in S: Add 's: *the alumni's contributions, women's rights*.
- Plural Nouns Ending in S: Add only an apostrophe: *the churches' needs, the girls' toys*.
- Nouns Plural in Form, Singular in Meaning: Add only an apostrophe: *mathematics' rules*.
- Nouns the Same in Singular and Plural: Treat them the same as plurals, even if the meaning is singular: *one corps' location, two deer's tracks*.
- Singular Nouns not Ending in S: Add 's: *the church's needs, the girl's toy*.

Some style guides say that singular nouns ending in s sounds such as *ce, x, and z* may take either the apostrophe alone or 's. For consistency, Oberlin style is always to use 's if the word does not end in the letter s: *the prince's life, Marx's theories, the fox's den, Butz's policies*.

- Singular Common Nouns Ending in S: Add 's unless the next word begins with s: *the hostess's invitation, the hostess' seat*.
- Singular Proper Names Ending in S: Use only an apostrophe: *Dickens' novels, Hercules' labors, Moses' law, Agnes' book*.
- Special Expressions: The following exceptions to the general rule for words not ending in s apply to words that end in an s sound and are followed by a word that begins with s: *for appearance' sake, for conscience' sake, for goodness' sake*.

• Descriptive Phrases: Do not add an apostrophe to a word ending in s when it is used primarily in a descriptive sense: *citizens band radio, a Cincinnati Reds infielder, a teachers college, a writers guide*. (The apostrophe is not used if *for* or *by* rather than *of* would be appropriate in the longer form: *a radio band for citizens, a guide for writers*.)

An 's is required, however, when a term involves a plural word that does not end in s: *a children's hospital, a people's republic*.

- Compound Words: Applying the rules above, add an apostrophe or 's to the word closest to the object possessed: *the major general's decision, the major generals' decisions, the attorney general's request, the attorneys general's requests*.
- Joint Possession, Individual Possession: Use a possessive form after only after the last word if ownership is joint: *Fred and Sylvia's apartment*.

Use a possessive form after both words if the objects are individually owned: *Fred's and Sylvia's books*.

post- (prefix) The trend in English is away from the use of hyphens in compounds made with the prefix *post*. The Oberlin style is to close up prefixes unless doing so could cause confusion or spellings that could be difficult for readers to decipher. Below is a list of Oberlin's preferred spellings of some *post-* compounds. If a word is not listed below, it probably no longer contains a hyphen. Refer to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, or the most recent edition available.

- postadolescent
- postbaccalaureate
- postcard
- postdate, postdated
- postdoctoral, postdoc, postdoctorate
- postelection, postelectorate
- post game
- postgraduate
- post office, *but* U.S. Postal Service
- postseason
- posttraumatic, *but* post-traumatic stress disorder

pre- a prefix meaning earlier than, before, prior to, or in front of. The trend in English is away from the use of hyphens in compounds made with the prefix *pre*. The Oberlin style is to close up prefixes unless doing so could cause confusion or spellings that could be difficult for readers to decipher. Below is a list of Oberlin's preferred spellings of some common *pre-* compounds. If a word is not listed below, it probably no longer contains a hyphen. Refer to Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition, or the most recent edition available.

- preapprove
- preassembled
- precollegiate
- precombustion
- preconcert
- prefinance
- pre-K
- pre-owned
- Pre-Raphaelite
- preschedule

premier, premiere

premier (adjective) means first in position, rank, or importance. *Oberlin is a premier liberal arts institution.*

Premiere (noun) a first performance or exhibition. *Her new symphony's premiere takes place tonight.*

Premiere (verb) to give or have the first public performance. *The Oberlin Orchestra will premiere her new symphony.*

principal, principle *Principal* is a noun or adjective meaning someone or something first in rank, authority, importance, or degree: *She is the school principal. He was the principal player in the trade. Money is the principal problem.*

Principle is a noun that means a fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force: *They fought for the principle of self-determination.*

print out (v.), printout (n.) *I printed out the viewbook manuscript. I gave the printout to the admissions office.*

pro- a prefix meaning to favor, support, or champion. Takes a hyphen *pro-life, pro-choice, pro-labor*

professional titles see **titles, academic and professional**

professorships Titles of named professorships and fellowships are always capitalized. See **endowed chairs**.

programs see **academic departments and programs**

prove, proved, proving, proven Use *proven* only as an adjective: *a proven remedy*.

The past participle is proved.

Incorrect: *Her conclusions have proven correct.*

Correct: *Her conclusions have proved correct.*

Pulitzer Prize winner, but Pulitzer-Prize winning

punctuation It is standard practice in typeset material to leave one space (not two) after punctuation and before the next sentence. See **formatting**



quality *Quality* is a noun, not an adjective. However, something may be described as high-quality.

Correct: *Oberlin's program is of a very high quality. Oberlin runs a high-quality program.*

Incorrect: *He is a quality player. She is a quality*

individual.

quotation marks See Punctuation Appendix.

R

racial and ethnic designations See ethnic and racial designations.

radio stations, local WOBC 91.5 FM; WVIZ 104.9 FM; WCPN 92.3 FM

RAM random access memory

rank, faculty See faculty rank.

real-time (adj.), real time (n.) something that is telecast, broadcast, or relayed as it is happening

re-elect

regions See direction, regions

repertoire/repertory Although both words are used correctly to describe the complete list or supply of dramas, operas, or musical works available for performance, *repertoire* is the preferred form.

Repertory should be used to refer to a company that presents several different plays, operas, or pieces usually alternately in the course of a season at one theater. Repertory also can refer to a theater housing such a company.

repurpose to reuse content and or electronic coding and or layout for multiple applications

Reunion Weekend

reunion class Do not capitalize: *25th reunion class.*

rich connotes enhanced *rich multimedia, rich e-mail*

right-click

ROM read-only memory

rock 'n' roll see formatting

room numbers Use figures and capitalize *room* when used with a figure: *Room 307.*

Romantic capitalize when referring to the cultural movement and style to distinguish it from the emotional characteristic. A recording of Romantic piano classics could contain works by such Romantic-era composers as Brahms, Chopin, and Debussy, while romantic piano classics might include such songs as "Moon River" and "The Way We Were."

RSS rich site summary or really simple syndication; a format for delivering regularly changing web content. An RSS feed allows you to remain easily stay informed by retrieving the latest content from the sites you are interested in. You save time by not needing to visit each site individually.

S

scene numbers: Capitalize scene when used with a figure: *Scene 2; Act 2, Scene 4.*

But: the second scene, the third scene.

scholar, scholarship Lowercase except when used with proper names: *a Mary Elizabeth Johnston Scholar, the Conservatory Dean's Scholarship.*

school board

schoolbook, schoolhouse, schoolroom

seasons Lowercase *spring, summer, fall,* and *winter* and derivatives such as *springtime* unless they are part of a formal name: *Winter Olympic Games.*

semester Lowercase. *She was enrolled for fall semester. The spring 2002 semester began in February.*

semiannual Occurring twice a year; half-yearly; biannual

send off (v.), sendoff (n., adj.) *We plan to send off the letter as soon as possible. The class president proposed a senior sendoff event for all students.*

set up (v.) to install or configure software or hardware

setup (n., adj.) the way a computer's hardware or software is configured

(sic) Use *(sic)*, which means *intentionally so written*, in parenthesis to indicate that an error in the quoted material is being reproduced exactly. Sic is italicized but not followed by a period.

spam (n., v.) Internet junk mail; to crash a program with excessive data (SPAM refers to the Hormel's Food Corporation product)

special characters see **formatting**

spring semester

socioeconomic

somebody, someone Somebody and someone take singular verbs. However, *they* or *their* are both acceptable second references: *Somebody needs to drive their car to the store. Someone should tell us their version of the story.* This construction avoids the awkward his/her construction.

sports terminology Use the *Associated Press Stylebook* as a reference tool.

start up (verb), startup (noun or adjective)

state Lowercase in all *state of* constructions: *state of Ohio, the states of New York and Michigan.*

Apply the same principal to phrases such as *the city of Chicago, the town of Auburn.* See **city**.

state names Capitalize the names of all states. Any state name may be condensed, preferably with the standard abbreviation, to fit typographical requirements for tabular material.

In running text, the names of states, territories, and possessions of the United States should be spelled in full. In class notes, use the standard postal abbreviation.

In listing a full address, either line by line or in running text, use the postal code without a comma between the city and the state.

State Name	Standard Abbreviation	Postal Code
Alabama	Ala.	AL
Alaska	Alaska	AK
Arizona	Ariz.	AZ
Arkansas	Ark.	AR

California	Calif.	CA
Colorado	Colo.	CO
Connecticut	Conn.	CT
Delaware	Del.	DE
District of Columbia	D.C.	DC
Florida	Fla.	FL
Georgia	Ga.	GA
Hawaii	Hawaii	HI
Idaho	Idaho	ID
Illinois	Ill.	IL
Indiana	Ind.	IN
Iowa	Iowa	IA
Kansas	Kan.	KY
Louisiana	La.	LA
Maine	Maine	ME
Maryland	Md.	MD
Massachusetts	Mass.	MA
Michigan	Mich.	MI
Minnesota	Minn.	MN
Mississippi	Miss.	MS
Missouri	Mo.	MO
Montana	Mont.	MT
Nebraska	Neb.	NE
Nevada	Nev.	NV
New Hampshire	N.H.	NH
New Jersey	N.J.	NJ
New York	N.Y.	NY
North Carolina	N.C.	NC
North Dakota	N.D.	ND
Ohio	Ohio	OH
Oklahoma	Okla.	OK
Oregon	Ore.	OR
Pennsylvania	Pa.	PA
Rhode Island	R.I.	RI
South Carolina	S.C.	S C
South Dakota	S.D.	SD
Tennessee	Tenn.	TN
Texas	Texas	TX
Utah	Utah	UT
Vermont	Vt.	VT
Virginia	Va.	VA
Washington	Wash.	WA
West Virginia	W.Va.	WV
Wisconsin	Wis.	WI
Wyoming	Wyo.	WY

statewide, not state-wide or state wide

stationary, stationery To stand still is to be *stationary*.

Letters are written on *stationery*.

study abroad, study-abroad program

suspensive hyphenation The form: *The 5- and 6-year-olds attend morning classes. The course covers 18th- and 19th-century literature.*

syllabus The plural is *syllabi*.

symposium The plural is *symposia*.

T

T-shirt

task force

techno closed compound: technophile, technoanxiety, technological

teenage, teenager

tele closed compound: teleprompter, telecommute, teleconference, teleworker

telephone numbers When printing telephone numbers that include area codes in running text, use hyphens: 440-775-8474. (In stylized typography, such as that used in mastheads or advertising, other typographic methods may be used to separate the sections of a telephone number.)

Do not place area codes in parentheses.

Do not include 1 as part of a toll-free number.

Campus extension numbers should be written with a lowercase x followed by the number: x58474.

temperature: Always use numerals, except for *zero*, which should be spelled out, and spell out *degrees*. Do not use plus (+) and minus (-) signs. In nonscientific contexts, give temperature in the Fahrenheit scale. There is no need to specify Fahrenheit or Celsius, unless the chance of confusion exists.

Incorrect: It is minus seven degrees with the wind-chill factor.

Incorrect: It is -7 degrees with the wind-chill factor.

Better: It is minus 7 degrees with the wind-chill factor.

Best: It is 7 degrees below zero with the wind-chill factor.

textbook

that, which, who, whom (pronouns) Use *who* and *whom* in referring to people and to animals with a name: *John Jones is the man who helped me.* See **who, whom**.

Use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without names.

that, which Use *that* to introduce an essential clause: *I like to do needlework that has intricate designs.*

Use *which* to introduce a nonessential clause that refers to an inanimate object: *The introductory German course, which was initiated last fall, has been cancelled.*

the An initial *the* in periodical titles, even if part of the official title, is lowercased (unless it begins the sentence) and is not italicized. The *Chicago Tribune*. She reads the *New York Times*.

Foreign-language titles retain the article in the original language, if it is an official part of the title. *Le Monde*.

In names of institutions, companies, associations, and conferences: Full names are capitalized. A *the* preceding a name, even when part of the official title, is lowercased in running text: *the University of Chicago, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Library of Congress, the National Organization for Women, the Ohio State University.*

See **names of institutions, titles of works**

time of day Use figures except for *noon* and *midnight*. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *11 a.m. 1 p.m. 3:30 p.m.*

The abbreviations a.m. and p.m. are always lowercased with periods. It is also acceptable to use small caps without periods. *11 AM, 10 PM.*

Never use a.m. with morning, or p.m. with evening; never use o'clock with a.m., p.m., or figures: *The show begins at eight o'clock.*

Never use the forms 12 a.m., 12 p.m., 12 noon, or 12 midnight. Use *midnight* and *noon* instead.

In running text, use *to* between times: *The meeting runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

Hyphens can be used between days and times in lists or tabular matter: Monday-Friday; 1-5 p.m.

time periods Never use a hyphen between two years to indicate a period of time.

- o Correct: She was president of the organization from 1975 to 1980.
- o Incorrect: She was president of the organization from 1975-1980.

A hyphen is used only when the two years are consecutive, as in an academic or fiscal year, e.g. the 2009-10 academic year. See **academic years**.

time sequences Use figures, colons, and periods as follows: *2:30:21.65* (hours, minutes, seconds, tenths, hundredths).

time zones Capitalize the full name of the time in force within a particular zone: Eastern Standard Time, Central Standard Time, Mountain Standard Time, Pacific Standard Time, Eastern Daylight Time, etc.

Lowercase all but the region in short forms: *the Eastern time zone*, *Eastern time*, *Mountain time*, etc.

Spell out *time zone* in references not accompanied by a clock reading: *Chicago is in the Central time zone*.

The abbreviations *EST*, *CDT*, *MST*, *PST*, etc. are acceptable on first reference for zones used within the continental United States, Canada, and Mexico only if the abbreviation is linked with a clock reading: *noon EST*, *9 a.m. PST*. The abbreviation is not set off with commas.

Spell out all references to time zones not used with the contiguous United States.

titles, academic and professional Capitalize formal titles when they appear before a person's name; lowercase when they appear after a person's name. *Professor of Art Henry Jones taught the course. The course is taught by Henry Jones, professor of art.*

Titles are also lowercased when they are used in constructions that are set off by commas: *George Bush, the president, is from Texas.*

Separate a long title from a name by a construction that requires a comma: *Joe Smith, the undersecretary of state for economic affairs, attended the meeting.*

See **capitalization; courtesy titles; honorific titles**

titles of works In general, use headline style for capitalization: capitalize the first and last words of the title, plus all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinating conjunctions (*if*, *because*, *as*, *that*, etc.). Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*), and prepositions, regardless of length, are lowercased unless they are the first or last word of the title or subtitle.

In titles of books, periodicals, and musical works, an initial *a*, *an*, or *the* may be dropped if it does not fit the surrounding syntax. *The orchestra performed Stravinsky's Rite of Spring*. See **titles of works**.

Additional guidelines for specific types of works are listed below.

- art works—Titles of paintings, drawings, sculptures, and other works of art are italicized.
- art exhibitions—Italicize.
- books—Titles of books are italicized.
- other publications (newspapers, magazines, journals,

etc.)—These titles are italicized. Even if *the* appears in the official title, don't capitalize or italicize it. *He reads the New York Times every morning.*

- theses and other unpublished works—capitalize and enclose in quotation marks
 - websites—names of websites are capitalized. Oberlin Online, Cleveland.com
 - blogs and online publications—capitalize, no italics, no quotation marks
 - articles, essays, chapters, short stories, etc.—Set in Roman type and enclose in quotation marks.
 - musical works— see **musical works, titles of**
 - recordings—the name of an album, regardless of format, is italicized. The name of the performer(s) is set in roman type. Individual items in the album are treated as described in the **musical works, titles of entry**.
 - Miles Davis' album *'Round about Midnight* is widely considered one of the greatest jazz recordings of all time.
 - *Opera News* named Denyce Graves' 2003 CD *Lost Days: Music in the Latin Style* Best of the Year.
 - In the March 2003 issue of *Mojo* magazine, music critic Barney Hoskyn's made the case that Todd Rundgren's 1973 album, *A Wizard, A True Star*, "is simply the greatest album ever made."
 - poems—generally, poem titles are set in Roman type and enclosed in quotation marks. A very long poetic work, especially one constituting a book, is italicized and not enclosed in quotation marks.
 - Robert Frost's poem "The Housekeeper" is in his collection *A Boy's Will*
 - Dante's *Inferno*
 - plays—Italicize the titles of plays.
 - television and radio shows—Italicize titles of television and radio series. Individual episodes of a series are set in roman type and enclosed in quotation marks.
 - She makes sure never to miss a broadcast of American Public Media's *A Prairie Home Companion*.
 - This week, the episode "Scary Monsters and Super Creeps," of the TV series *Flash Forward*, airs on ABC.
 - movies—Italicize the titles of movies.
 - concert series, conferences, lecture series, symposia, and other multi-event programs—capitalize, but do not italicize or use quotation marks for names of lecture series.
 - lectures, panel discussions, seminars, and other individual presentations— Set in Roman type and enclose in quotation marks.
- NOTE: If running text set in italics includes a title that should be italicized, set the title in Roman.
- Hyphens in titles: For guidelines on the use of hyphens in titles, see the entry **hyphen** in the **Punctuation Appendix**.

toll free *The number is toll free.*

toll-free *Call the toll-free number listed on the screen.*

touchpad

toward Not towards

trademarks Capitalize brand names that are registered trademarks. Do not use the symbols ® and ™. Substitute a generic term when available.

- Kleenex; facial tissue, tissue
- Vaseline; petroleum jelly
- Xerox; photocopier

Twitter A real-time short messaging service that works over multiple networks and devices; a social networking site

Tweet (n.), **tweeting** (v.) A post on the Twitter social networking site or the act of posting on it. Each post or entry is referred to as a tweet and the act of sending a tweet is referred to as tweeting.

typography see **formatting**

U V W

undergraduate

underrepresented term used in place of *minority*, meaning insufficiently or inadequately represented, particularly in the workforce of a particular activity. This term is used to describe the extent to which women and minorities are represented in particular grade levels and job categories

under way Two words in virtually every use: *The project is under way.* One word only when used as an adjective before a noun: *The pilots must be experts at underway refueling.*

undo

university-wide not university wide or universitywide

upload to send a file from one computer to another computer or remote location

upper-class

upperclassman, upperclassmen Do not use. See **bias-free language**

up-to-date (adj., preceding noun)

upward Not upwards

URLs Current editorial usage is to exclude the *http://* tag on URLs in publications. Many web browsers add it automatically. This also helps shorten the URL in print.

Use a period when a URL ends the sentence.

Break URLs right before a punctuation mark, carrying the punctuation mark to the next line.

Don't break a URL at a hyphen. Don't add a hyphen unless it appears in the address.

In running text, URLs should appear in Roman type, like e-mail addresses.

U.S. (adj) abbreviate only when used as an adjective, otherwise spell out. *The U.S. Post Office. Be sure to get a U.S. map. The United States will have its presidential election in November.*

USB universal serial bus

user-friendly (jargon) instead, use *accessible, easy to use, well designed*

Usenet network of newsgroups that operate across the Internet

verbs, split forms In general, avoid awkward constructions that split infinitive forms of a verb (*to leave, to help*) or compound forms (*had left, are helping*).

- Awkward: She was ordered to immediately leave on an assignment.
- Preferred: She was ordered to leave immediately on an assignment.
- Awkward: There stood the wagon that we had early last autumn left by the barn.
- Preferred: There stood the wagon that we had left by the barn early last summer.

Occasionally, however, a split is not awkward and is necessary to convey the meaning:

- He wanted to really help his mother.
- Those who lie are often found out.
- How has your health been?
- The budget was tentatively approved.

versus Abbreviate as vs. in all uses.

vice Use two words: vice chair, vice president.

video use closed compound in most instances

- o videocam
- o videodisc
- o videoconference
- o videotape
- o video camera,
- o video port

viral marketing marketing technique where people are asked to contact friends to recommend a product

virtual added to a word to signify, not real, conceptual, as in virtual meeting, virtual reality virtual tour, virtual world

voice mail

web Short for World Wide Web. Do not capitalize. The web is an information sharing model that is a component of the Internet. It is system of Internet servers that support specially formatted documents. The documents are formatted in a hypertext markup language referred to as HTML that supports links to other documents, graphics, audio and video files. Do not use as a synonym for Internet.

Web 2.0 refers to a variety of second generation web-based services that includes Wikis, social networking sites, e-communication tools, etc., that emphasize online sharing and collaboration among users; also refers to companies or products that can only exist on the Internet (e.g., eBay, craigslist, Wikipedia, Skype, digg.com, among others)

web address

web-based

web browser

web directory

webcam

webcast

webinar

webmaster

webpage

website

webTV (n., adj.)

web URL

webzine (jargon) refers to informal newsletter or magazine, also *zine*,

weekend

weeklong

weights Use figures: *The baby weighed 9 pounds, 7 ounces. She had a 9-pound, 7-ounce boy.*

well-being

who, whom Use *who* and *whom* for references to human beings and to animals with a name. Use *that* and *which* for inanimate objects and animals without a name.

Who is the word when someone is the subject of a sentence, clause, or phrase: *The woman who rented the room left the window open. Who is there?*

Whom is the word when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: *The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open. Whom do you wish to see?*

winter term (n.), **winter-term** (adj.) Do not capitalize. *Oberlin's winter term is the month of January, when students complete winter-term projects.*

wireless the ability of a computer to access e-mail, the Internet without being physically connected by cable.

WOBC Oberlin's radio station (91.5 FM) see **radio stations**

words as words Italicize words used as words. Example: In this sense, *apology* means a formal justification or defense.

workaround a bypass of a recognized problem in a system. A workaround is typically a temporary fix that implies that a genuine solution to the problem is needed.

workflow

workforce

workgroup

workload

workout

workplace

workstation

work-study, Federal Work-Study Program, work-study students Use work-study as an adjective, not a noun.

workweek

world-class

worldwide

World Wide Web This is the only construction in which *worldwide* appears as two words.

X Y Z

year-end (adj.)

yearlong

years Use figures, without commas: *1975*. Use an *s* without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1890s, the 1800s*.

Years are the lone exception to the general rule in **numbers** that a figure is not used to start a sentence. *1976 was the bicentennial year.*

yesteryear

zip code Do not capitalize zip unless it is the first word in a sentence or on a form where all other categories are capitalized. *She wrote the zip code on the envelope. Zip codes are necessary for correct addresses.*

Punctuation Appendix

ampersand (&) Use the ampersand when it is part of an organization's formal name (*Creativity & Leadership Project, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad*). The use of the ampersand is appropriate in the Oberlin College logo and as a design element in promotional material. The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of *and* (*College of Arts and Sciences, not College of Arts & Sciences*).

apostrophe Use an apostrophe to indicate that a noun is possessive. See **possessives** in the alphabetical listings.

brackets ([]) Use brackets to add explanations or corrections to quoted material: *Before I knew what happened," said the coach, "he [Devlin] had scored."*

Use brackets as parentheses within parentheses: *The game has been immortalized in articles and a book (Harry Walters, *The Game that Went Down in History* [New York: Good Sports Press, 1987]).*

bullet (•) Bulleted items that conclude an introductory sentence should be lowercase and punctuated with a comma or semicolon at the end of each item except for the last. Use the word *and* before the last bulleted item, and end the sentence with a period.

Applicants to Oberlin College must

- *complete the application,*
- *submit recommendations,*
- *submit scores for the SAT or ACT, and*
- *submit scores for the TOEFL, if English is not the first language.*

Bulleted items that are not part of an introductory sentence may be upper- or lowercase and may end with either periods or no punctuation. Be consistent with a format within any given context:

Area residents enjoy a variety of seasonal recreational activities:

- *hiking*
- *biking*
- *skiing*
- *boating*

Use a space between the bullet and the first word of each item.

colon (:) The colon is a mark of anticipation.

It indicates that what follows the mark will complete or amplify what came before it.

Use a colon to introduce a list or series. Do not use a colon between a verb and its complement or object.

Correct: *The dean named three likely candidates for the award: John Doe, Mary Smith, and Jane Doodle.*

Incorrect: *The three candidates are: Doe, Smith, and Doodle.*

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The company will make good all the losses.* But: *There were three considerations: time, expense, and feasibility.*

EMPHASIS: The colon often can be effective in giving emphasis: *He had only one hobby: eating.*

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTATION MARKS: Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation itself.

comma (,) The following guidelines treat some of the most frequent questions about the use of commas.

IN A SERIES: Use a comma to separate the elements in a series. Place a comma before the concluding conjunction in the series. *He had taken exams in algebra, trigonometry, and calculus.*

WITH EQUAL ADJECTIVES: Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in rank. If the commas could be replaced by the word *and* without changing the sense, the adjectives are equal: *a thoughtful, precise manner; a dark, dangerous street.*

Use no comma when the last adjective before a noun outranks its predecessors because it is an integral element of a noun phrase, which is the equivalent of a single noun: *a cheap fur coat, the old oaken bucket, a new, blue spring bonnet.*

WITH CONJUNCTIONS: When a conjunction such as *and, but, for, or, nor, because,* or *so* links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction in most cases. *She was glad she had looked, for a man was approaching the house. The school offers courses in art, and it has a fine program in art history.*

As a rule of thumb, use a comma if the subject of each clause is expressly stated: *We are visiting Washington, and we also plan a side trip to Williamsburg.* But no comma is used when the subject of the two clauses is the same and is not repeated in the second clause: *We are visiting Washington and plan to see the White House.*

WITH NONESSENTIAL CLAUSES: A nonessential clause can be deleted from the sentence without changing the meaning. A nonessential clause must be set off from the rest of the sentence by commas. *Mary, who was the tallest girl in the class, enjoyed science.*

Essential clauses are not set off by commas. Essential clauses cannot be eliminated without altering the meaning of the sentence. *Writers who do not consult the stylebook should not criticize the editor.*

WITH INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES AND PHRASES: A comma is used to separate an introductory clause or phrase from the main clause: *When he had tired of the mad pace of New York, he moved to Oberlin.*

The comma may be omitted after short introductory phrases if no ambiguity would result: *During the night he heard many noises.*

INTRODUCING DIRECT QUOTES: Use a comma to introduce a quotation of one or more complete sentences: *John said, "I think it's time to head home."*

Do not use a comma at the start of an indirect or partial quotation: *He said the victory put him "firmly on the road to the presidency."*

BEFORE ATTRIBUTION: Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution: *"I have no comment," John Doe said.*

Do not use a comma if the quoted statement ends with a question mark or exclamation mark: *"Go home!" he said.*

WITH APPOSITIVES: Unless it is restrictive, a word, phrase, or clause that is in apposition to a noun is usually set off by commas.

Correct: *My wife, Elizabeth, wrote to our senator.*

Correct: *The opposition leader, Senator Smith, introduced new legislation.*

Correct: *I gave the book to my son Michael.* (This is restrictive—I have more than one son.)

Correct: *Gail Godwin's book Evensong is one of my favorite books.* (This is restrictive—Godwin has written more than one book.)

NAMES OF STATES AND NATIONS USED WITH CITY NAMES: *His journey will take him from Dublin, Ireland, to Fargo, North Dakota, and back again.*

WITH DATES: When a date consists only of a month and year, do not use a comma between them: *March 2001.*

When a phrase refers to a month, day, and year, set off the year with commas: *Feb. 15, 1959, is her birthday.*

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Commas always go inside quotation marks.

dash (—) The dash is typed as an em-dash (shift-option-hyphen on a Macintosh), with no space between the dash and the words that precede or follow.

Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause: *We'll fly to Paris in June—if I get a raise. Smith offered a plan—it was unprecedented—to raise revenues.*

When a phrase that would otherwise be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas, use dashes to set off the full phrase: *He listed the qualities—intelligence, humor, and independence—that he liked in an executive.*

ellipsis (...) In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods with a space on either side, as shown here.

Use an ellipsis to indicate the omission of one or more words in a quotation. *"Ask ... what you can do for your country."*

If an ellipsis precedes a period or other punctuation mark, attach the mark without leaving a space: *"He felt it was too late to go back"*

exclamation point (!) Use the mark to express a high degree of surprise, incredulity, or other strong emotion. Exclamation points should be used sparingly.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Place the mark inside the quotation marks when it is part of the quoted material. Do not use a comma or a period after the exclamation mark.

Correct: *"How wonderful!" she shouted.*

Incorrect: *"Halt!", the corporal cried.*

Place the mark outside the quotation mark when it is not part of the quotation:

I hated reading Spenser's "Faerie Queene"!

hyphen (-) Hyphens are joiners. They connect two things that are intimately related, usually words that function together as a single concept or work together as a joint modifier. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. (e.g., tie-in, toll-free call, two-thirds).

AVOID AMBIGUITY: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: *The president will speak to small-business men.* (*Businessmen* normally is one word. But *the president will speak to small businessmen* is unclear. They are not short men who work in business; they work for small businesses.)

Others: *He recovered his health. He re-covered the table.*

COMPOUND MODIFIERS: When a compound modifier—two or more words that express a single concept—precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *-ly*: *a first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a better-qualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an*

easily remembered rule.

Many combinations that are hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated when they occur after a noun: *The team scored in the first quarter. The dress, a bluish green, was attractive on her. She works full time. His attitude suggested that he knew it all.*

But when a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion: *The man is well-known. The woman is quick-witted. The children are soft-spoken.*

COMPOUND NUMBERS: Hyphenate the written form of fractions and compound numbers from 21 to 99: *One-fourth of my income goes to rent. Five hundred and twenty-three people attended the kickoff.*

AVOID DUPLICATED VOWELS, TRIPLED CONSONANTS: Examples: *anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.*

SUSPENSIVE HYPHENATION: The form: *He studied 18th- and 19th-century literature.*

Note: Compound adjectives denoting dual heritage are not hyphenated: *Italian American, Mexican American, Latin American.*

HYPHENS IN TITLES: The first word in a hyphenated compound of a title is always capitalized. Subsequent words are capitalized unless they are articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions, or such modifiers as flat, sharp, and natural following musical key symbols. If a compound comes at the end of a title, the second element is always capitalized. *Out-of-Fashion Initiatives, E-flat Concerto, A Run-in with Authorities, Avoiding a Run-In.*

parentheses () Use parentheses to add useful information for the reader. Parentheses are distracting and should be used sparingly; setting off incidental material by commas or dashes often is more effective.

When parentheses are necessary, follow these guidelines:

PUNCTUATION: Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (*such as this fragment*).

(An independent parenthetical sentence such as this one takes a period before the closing parenthesis.)

When a phrase placed in parentheses (*this one is an example*) might normally qualify as a complete sentence but is dependent on the surrounding material, do not capitalize the first word or end with a period.

period (.) Use a period, even when a sentence ends with a URL or e-mail address.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Periods always go inside quotation marks.

question mark (?) Question marks are placed inside or outside quotation marks, depending on the meaning:

Who wrote the song "Let It Be?"

He asked, "How long will it take?"

quotation marks Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation. Single quote marks are used to denote a quote within a quote:

He said, "I'm doing my best."

"I'm doing my best," he said.

He stated, "He meant it when he said 'I am doing my best.'"

RUNNING QUOTATIONS: When a quotation is longer than one paragraph, use quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph but only at the end of the last paragraph.

IN TITLES: Titles of some types of works are enclosed in quotation marks. See **titles of works**.

PLACEMENT WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION: Follow these long-established rules:

- The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.
- The dash, the semicolon, the question mark, and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

semicolon (;) Use a semicolon when you want to separate two main clauses but keep them more tightly linked than they would be as two separate sentences: *She achieved all her goals; we were quite impressed.*

Use semicolons to separate elements in a series when they are punctuated internally: *I can't remember whether the opinion was expressed by Smith, the chair; Jones, the secretary; or Dooley, the treasurer.*

Use a semicolon to link independent clauses connected by however, moreover, therefore, consequently, nevertheless, and otherwise: *She excelled in all her studies; therefore she attained the highest academic honors.*

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