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## Becker College Office of Marketing and Strategic Communications

### Editorial Style Guide

The College follows *The Chicago Manual of Style* and in-house style guidelines as outlined below. For news releases, the College uses the *AP (Associated Press) Stylebook*.

#### Abbreviations

- Include a space between letters in name initials.
  - *Example: J. Q. Adams, E. C. A. Becker*
- Do not add space between U and S in United States (e.g., U.S.)
- Spell out or use common (not post office) abbreviations for U.S. states.
  - *Example: The event took place on the College's Worcester, Mass., campus.*

#### Abbreviations: Plurals

- Use an apostrophe to indicate ownership with an acronym.
  - *Example: The YMCA's guidelines were used.*
- Do not use an apostrophe to indicate more than one.
  - *Example: The meeting included representatives from several YMCAs.*

#### Academic Degrees

- Do not capitalize degree names unless the designation is a proper name (e.g., bachelor of English).
- Designate degree names as:
  - bachelor of science, bachelor of arts, bachelor's degree, B.S., B.A.
  - master of arts, master's degree, M.A., M.S.
  - doctoral degree, Ph.D.

*Note: A master of business administration is indicated as MBA.*

- Do not italicize cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude.
- Use a comma between a name and the degree.
  - *Example: John Smith, B.A.*
- Use commas to separate multiple degrees.
  - *Example: John Smith, B.A., M.A.'07*

## Acronyms

- Spell out the first reference followed by the acronym in parentheses; the acronym may be used for subsequent references.

*Note: Acronyms may be used for the first reference if they are widely recognized (e.g., SAT, NASA).*

## Alumnus/Alumni

- Alumnus denotes one graduate of the College.
- Alumni refers to more than one alumnus.

## And

- Use the word “and” except when “&” is part of the official title of a business, department, etc.

## Becker College

- Becker can be used alone if the full name of the College has been previously used and it is clear that Becker refers to Becker College.
- BC should not be used in text.
- Capitalize College when referring to Becker College.
- All Becker College events are capitalized (e.g., Reunion, Commencement, Convocation, etc.).

## Capitalization: Campus Buildings

- Capitalize the formal names of campus buildings (e.g., Boutin Student Center), but not informal references (e.g., the student center).

## Capitalization: Departments, Offices, Committees

- Capitalize the formal names of departments, offices, programs, and committees, but lowercase shortened or non-official names.

*Examples:*

- *The Department of Graphic Design; the graphic design department; the department*
- *The Office of the Registrar; the registrar’s office; the registrar*
- *The Becker College Board of Trustees; the Board of Trustees; the trustees; the board*

## Capitalization: Disciplines

- Capitalize a specific course (e.g., Introduction to Game Design), but not an informal reference to a course (e.g., the game design course).

- Majors and minors are lowercased, except when proper names are part of the title.
  - *Example: She majored in criminal justice and minored in English.*

### **Capitalization: Events**

- The formal names of special events are capitalized (e.g., Commencement, Reunion, etc.).
- Capitalize and put in quotation marks the titles of lectures.
  - *Example: The lecture is entitled, "An Introduction to Animal Science Careers."*

### **Capitalization: People**

- Capitalize a job title when it immediately precedes a person's name.
  - *Examples: Vice President Jane Jones, but Jane Jones, vice president; Professor Harold Smith, but Harold Smith, professor*

*Note: Endowed professorships are capitalized, even when the title follows the name.*

### **Class Year**

- Always use a space before a class year.
  - *Example: John Smith '11*
- Ensure the apostrophe is facing away from the class year.
  - *Example: '11, not '11*
- For more than one year, place a comma between designations
  - *Example: John Smith '11, M.A.'13*

### **Dates and Times: Dates**

- Use numerals for days of the month.
  - *Example: October 20, not October 20<sup>th</sup>.*
- Spell out all references to months.
  - *Example: October 20, not Oct. 20.*
- Do not place a comma between the month and year.
  - *Example: October 2011, not October, 2011.*
- Place a comma after the year in a complete date.
  - *Example: On October 20, 2011, the event occurred.*

### **Dates and Times: Time**

- Always use the complete time period, even if it is just an hour designation.
  - *Example: 7:00 p.m., not 7 p.m.*

- Periods are used for a.m. and p.m., unless the font used is small caps.
- When citing the exact time, use numerals.
  - *Example: 7:00 p.m., not seven p.m.*
- Use noon for 12:00 p.m. and midnight for 12:00 a.m.
- Seasons are lowercased, even when combined with a year.
  - *Example: winter, not Winter; spring 2011, not spring of 2011*
- When listing start to end times, use an en dash.
  - *Example: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.*
- Times come before days and dates.
  - *Example: The game is at 2 p.m. on Saturday, September 12.*

### Dates and Times: Centuries and Decades

- Decades are either spelled out or indicated in numerals.
  - *Example: Many new laws were enacted in the 1930s. (Do not use an apostrophe.)*
- The year can be abbreviated with the last two digits and an apostrophe.
  - *Example: the '90s*

### Electronic Terminology

- When referencing a URL address within content, unless the link can be activated strive for placement of the URL at the end of a sentence. Do not use a period at the end of the sentence.

Refer to the following listing for the appropriate use of electronic terminology.

- website (one word; do not uppercase unless used at the beginning of a sentence)
- web page
- webcast
- podcast
- home page
- email (one word, no hyphen)
- Internet
- the Web
- online
- log in, log out
- database
- fax

### Emeritus/Emerita

- Emerita refers to a retired female who keeps her rank or title.
- Emeritus refers to a retired male who keeps his rank or title.

### Numbers

- Spell out numbers one through nine in text, including a person's age.
  - *Example: There are three people on the committee. There are 12 students in the class.*
  - *Example: When Johnny was five years old, he knew how to read.*
- When a number is the first word of a sentence, spell it out.
- When two or more numbers are used in a sentence or paragraphs, use all numerals.
  - *Example: The meeting was attended by 6 faculty, 4 students, and 12 administrators.*
- Express all percentages as figures and spell out the word percent, except in tables and charts.
  - *Example: 10 percent.*
- For large sums of money, use figures with a dollar sign (\$20,000); spell out million or billion (\$1 billion).
- Use commas for numbers signifying a thousand or more (1,275).
- Spell out the numeral designation of an annual event if used at the beginning of a sentence; use numerals in text.
  - *Example: Fourth annual community engagement day; This was the 4<sup>th</sup> annual community engagement day.*

### Publications

- Use italics to indicate published books, names of movies, plays, and television programs.

### Punctuation: Commas

- Use a comma before the words *and* as well as *or* in a series.
  - *Example: The students attended classes, went to the game, and ate dinner.*
- Commas always go inside quotation marks.
- Use a comma after e.g. or i.e.

### Punctuation: Colon

- Use a colon to introduce long lists.
  - *Example: The major prepares graduates to work in: industry, nonprofit organizations, businesses, schools, and the military.*
- Colons go outside quotation marks unless part of a quotation.

### Punctuation: Dash

- An en dash is used between numbers that are inclusive.
  - *Examples: 2010-11, Monday-Friday, pp. 12-13.*

- An em dash is used to highlight an element in a sentence or convey a break in thought. There are no spaces before or after the em dash.
  - *Example: John Smith—who earned a degree from Becker College—started his own business at the age of 50.*

### **Punctuation: Semi-colon**

- Use semi-colons to separate phrases that use commas.
  - *Example: Campus life offers such options as residence hall living, in Victorian-style houses; apartment units, complete with full kitchens; and suite-style rooms, with a common living space.*
- Semi-colons always go outside a quotation mark.

### **Telephone Numbers**

- For fax and phone numbers, periods between areas codes and numbers.
  - *Example: 508.555.1212*