

Grinnell Style Guide

Grinnell College has a number of style rules specific to the institution. Please use the following guidelines throughout your work. Any questions can be directed to Jackie Hartling Stolze, ext. 3404. Consistency is the goal.

- **abbreviations:** In general, do not abbreviate.
 - Do not set off “Inc.,” “P.C.,” “L.L.C.,” or similar abbreviations with commas when used following the name of a corporation, law firm, etc.
 - Use periods in the abbreviations of academic degrees such as M.A., Ph.D., M.B.A., etc. When spelled out, degrees are not capitalized (i.e., master’s degree).
 - Do not use periods when abbreviating AIDS, ASAP, CIA, CEO, CBS, etc.
 - Abbreviations using lowercase letters require periods: p.m., m.p.h., c.o.d.
 - See “States.”
 - Abbreviate United States to U.S. when used as an adjective (i.e., U.S. Naval Academy). Spell out United States in other uses.
- **academic degrees:**
 - Use periods in abbreviations of degrees: B.A., M.A., etc. When spelled out, degrees are not capitalized: master’s degree in chemistry, doctorate in English. Do not use an apostrophe in “master of arts” or “bachelor of arts,” but an apostrophe is needed in “master’s degree” and “bachelor’s degree.”
- **academic subjects:**
 - Lower case mathematics, history, women’s studies, etc., but capitalize formal department names: Department of English, etc.
 - Don’t capitalize names of majors, options, curricula, programs, or concentrations unless a specific course is being referred to, i.e., chemistry major, technology studies concentration, English major. However, do capitalize course titles such as The Art of Language.
 - Majors in the languages (English, French, German, etc.) are capitalized, i.e., English major.
- **a cappella ensemble:** This is the correct spelling.

- **admission:** Do not use the plural, admissions. For example, Office of Admission is the correct usage.
- **adviser:** We use adviser, not advisor.
- **alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae:** Use alumnus (alumni is the plural form) when referring to a man who has attended the College. Use alumna for similar references to a woman; alumnae is used for a group entirely made up of women who have attended the College. Use alumni when referring to a group of men and women.
- **alumni/student names:**
 - Class year appears after the name: **Harry Hopkins '12**. Be sure the tail on the apostrophe points to the left. This usage is followed for students as well, with their anticipated graduation year. Class year should be given on the first mention if at all possible, no later than the second mention.

To produce the right apostrophe when using a Macintosh, hit the shift, option, and] keys simultaneously. On the PC, (in Microsoft Word), hold down the control key and hit the apostrophe key twice.
 - For married alumnae, the middle or maiden name is used as well as the married name: **Jane Smith Doe '67**.
 - Every class year more than 95 years in the past is “spelled out” in its entirety. For instance, John Doe 1903, Jane Doe 1907, or Hannibal Kershaw 1879.
- **ampersand:** Use it sparingly, for corporations and law firms (i.e., AT&T, Casque & Gauntlet), but never for Joe and Donna Smith.
- **bookstore:** Grinnell College’s store is one word.
- **capitals:** Use them sparingly!
 - Capitalize all words, except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions, in the titles of books, plays, lectures, musical compositions, etc., including “A” and “The” if at the beginning of the title.
 - Capitalize the word “room” when used to designate a particular room: Noyce Science Center, Room 2001.
 - Do capitalize the word “College” when used as a reference for Grinnell College, i.e., “She attended the College from 1946–48.”
 - Do not capitalize “class” in “class of ’72” or “class president.”

- Don't capitalize academic semesters or terms: fall semester or fall 2000.
- See entries for academic subjects, academic degrees, titles, organizations, and geography.
- **centuries:** Do not spell out: 17th century. Don't forget to use a hyphen if used as an adjective: 17th-century artists.
- **coffeehouse:** It's one word.
- **College:** Capitalize when used as a second reference for Grinnell College.
- **comma:** Use the serial comma before "and" in a series. Example: "We could choose from soda, orange juice, and lemonade."
 - No comma is needed in "October 1993," but commas are needed in "The baby was born May 14, 1998, in Iowa City."
 - Set off the state with two commas when listing a city and state: "The event occurred in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1984."
 - Except for years, use a comma in all numbers exceeding three digits: 1,029.
 - Use a comma to set off a spouse's name when he or she is added in a parenthetical way: "She is survived by her husband, Dan Smith, and ..."
 - Introductory words such as names, i.e., and e.g., should be immediately preceded by a comma and followed by a comma.
 - No comma is used between "Jr." and the name it follows: **Martin Luther King Jr.**
- **Course titles:** Capitalize with no quotation marks, i.e., Self and Society.
- **coursework:** Coursework is one word, no hyphen.
- **courtesy titles:** In text, avoid courtesy titles such as Dr., Rev., etc. Use Dr. only for medical physicians.
- **dashes:** The most commonly used dash (also known as an "em dash") should be used with no spaces, i.e., "She enjoyed the course—it was a MAP." To produce an em dash: on the Mac, simultaneously hit the option+shift+hyphen keys; on the PC, pull down the "Insert" menu, choose "Symbols," and then choose the "Special characters" tab.

A slightly shorter dash (known as an "en dash") is most often used to connect

continuing, or inclusive, numbers, i.e., 1968–72 or 10 a.m.–noon. To produce an en dash: on the Mac, simulatenously hit option+hyphen; on the PC, pull down the “Insert” menu, choose “Symbols,” and choose the “Special characters” tab.

Em dash: —

En dash: –

Hyphen: -

- **dates:** It’s August 17, not August 17th or seventeenth.
 - Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date (Jan. 15, 1960), abbreviate these months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. All other months are never abbreviated.
 - Spell out the name of the month when used with a year only: March 1962. No comma needed.
- **distance** from other places to Grinnell is given in time, not in miles, i.e., Des Moines is one hour from Grinnell.
- **Eastern Standard Time:** Abbreviate as EST, without periods.
- **ellipses:** Use the three-period ellipses rather than hitting the period key three times. Put a space on either side of the ellipses, as you would any other word. When the omission is at the end of the sentence, use a fourth period at the end of the last word before the ellipsis. To produce the ellipsis: On the Mac you hit the option and semicolon keys at the same time; on a PC, pull down the insert menu and choose “Symbol,” and then “Special characters.”
- **emeritus:** Refers to retired male faculty members. Female faculty members who retire are “emerita” not “emeritus” as their male counterparts are. The plural is emeriti., for men, women, and mixed groups.
- **First-Year Tutorial:** Capitalize when you use the full title. When using “tutorial” alone, do not capitalize, i.e., His tutorial was popular with the students.
- **freshman:** We do not use freshman, sophomore or junior, but rather first-year student, second-year student, etc. A senior is a senior—not by any other name.
- **fundraising:** No hyphen.
- **gender:** Not sex.
- **geography:** Capitalize entire geographic names and regions of the country, but not points of the compass. Examples: He visited the South, the Midwest, and the East, but he traveled northeast.

- **GPA:** This acronym is fine on second reference for grade-point average. GPAs are expressed to two decimal places: 2.00 and 3.50.
- **Home school:** Not home schooled. Hyphenate when used as an adjective. “The home-school students arrived yesterday.”
- **hyphens:** Try to avoid unnecessary hyphens whenever possible, using the following guidelines.
 - Most hyphenations are used to avoid confusion and in compound modifiers preceding a noun (unless the modifiers is “very” or ends in –ly; these words almost never require a hyphen). Examples: He is a part-time student, but he attends school part time; She lives in an on-campus house, but he lives on campus.
 - Do not use a hyphen in words that could better be written as one word: online, waterfowl, etc. Check your dictionary when you’re not sure.
 - Use one hyphen, with no space before or after, in compound adjectives: on-campus enrollment.
 - Use an em-dash (—), achieved by hitting the option, shift, and hyphen keys on Macintosh, with no space before or after when a dash is needed. On the PC, simultaneously press ctrl, alt, and the dash symbol in the upper right-hand corner of your number keypad.
 - When used as an adjective state of the art is hyphenated. “State-of-the-art” technology is hyphenated, but the technology was state of the art is not.
 - Coursework is one word, no hyphen.
 - Don’t hyphenate liberal arts anything.
 - Online is one word, no hyphen.
 - Vice-president is hyphenated in college titles. For others in business or elsewhere, spell “vice president” with or without a hyphen as they indicate.
- **italics:** Italicize the names of books, plays, movies, television series, and other major works. The names of ships are also italicized.
 - Use quotation marks for songs, short musical selections, articles, and other short works such as single television episodes. (Examples: *Ironside*, “The Ghost of the Dancing Doll”)

- Italicize the names of magazines, newspapers, and other publications.
- Italicize the following Latin words, phrases, and abbreviations: *et al.*, *ibid.*, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*, *circa*.
- **Jr.:** Capitalize it, but don't set it off with a comma. Robert Smith Jr.
- **liberal arts:** Don't hyphenate liberal arts
- **local-area network:** Use a hyphen.
- **money:** In text, delete .00 (\$5); in tables, use .00 (\$5.00).
- **nonprofit:** No hyphen.
- **numbers:** Spell out numbers from one through nine, use numbers from 10 up.
 - Do not begin a sentence with numerals. Rewrite or spell out the figures. (Example: Twenty-five people attended the meeting.)
 - Spell out "first" through "ninth"; starting with 10th, use figures.
 - Use numbers within a series to maintain consistency if more than half of the numbers are 10 or over; otherwise spell out numbers within a series: 23 hours, 12 minutes, 6 seconds.
 - Use figures for sums that are cumbersome to spell out, but spell out the words million and billion: 17 billion, 26 million.
- **Office of Alumni and College Relations**
- **OK:** Not okay.
- **online** is one word, no hyphen.
- **organizations and departments:** Capitalize the complete formal names of organizations, institutions, departments, publications, agencies, committees, and offices: Office of Communication and Events, Department of English. Lowercase any fragmentary title such as the center, the department, communication office, etc.
 - Also capitalize the words association, building, center, club, conference, department, division, hall, office, senate, street, college, etc., when used as part of a title. Thereafter, do not capitalize the words when used also to refer to that specific place or group.
- **percent:** Spell it out as one word. Use the symbol % only in tables or charts.

- **plurals:** Do not form plurals with apostrophes. Use s or es. Example: '60s, B.A.s.
- **postcard:** It's one word.
- **postdoctoral:** No hyphen.
- **precalculus:** No hyphen.
- **prefixes:** Generally, use hyphens when the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel: pre-existing. Coordinate and cooperate are exceptions. Also use a hyphen when the word that follows the prefix is capitalized: Mid-Atlantic. To join double prefixes, use Sub-sub-Arctic.
- **professional titles:** Do not capitalize a title unless it immediately precedes a person's name (i.e., Associate Professor Bob Smith). When a title follows the name, it is lowercased (i.e., Bill Clinton was president of the United States).
 - Named, distinguished, and endowed professorships or chairs are always capitalized, no matter what the usage. For instance, "Otto Wiener is the Joshua D. Perkins Professor of Social Studies."
- **professor:** Every time you use the word professor it is always followed by "of", even in named professorships, such as "the Orville and Mary Patterson Rount Professor of Literature." Every time you use other words, such as lecturer, instructor, or assistant in the writing lab, you use the word "in."
- **races:** Lowercase blacks and whites, but capitalize identifications with geographic words: Asians, Native Americans, Indians, African Americans.
- **sexist language:** Avoid it. Use chair instead of chairman, etc.
- **spaces:** When typing copy on a computer, do not put two spaces at the end of a sentence. One is enough. Also, do not use two spaces after a colon.
- **spelling:** When there are two spellings for a word in your dictionary, use the first one given, such as judgment/judgement. While there is no substitute for a good dictionary, here are some frequent misspelled words:

accommodate
 Bookstore
 Fulbright Scholar
 full-time (adj.)
 fulltime (noun)
 fundraiser, fundraising
 nonprofit
 percent
 Phi Beta Kappa

roommate
theatre
T-shirt
vice-president
underrepresented

- **states:** When referring to a state by itself, as in “Grinnell College is in Iowa,” spell it out. When a city name accompanies the state, use the standard abbreviation (not the two-letter postal abbreviation). Example: “Jennifer lived in Fayette, Okla.” (Note below that there are eight states without a standard abbreviation—Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah. These are spelled out when used in text.) Also please note that “D.C.” is treated as a state when used to refer to the nation’s capital, and is set off with commas: “She visited Washington, D.C., as part of her internship.”
 - Only when giving a specific address that readers might transfer to an envelope should you use the postal code abbreviation and the ZIP without a comma, i.e., “Submissions can be made to the *Grinnell Review*, Grinnell College, Grinnell IA 50112-1690.”
 - Here is the state abbreviations chart to follow:

Ala./AL	Miss./MS
Alaska/AK	Mo./MO
Ariz./AZ	Mont./MT
Ark./AR	Neb./NE
Calif./CA	Nev./NV
Colo./CO	N.H./NH
Conn./CT	N.J./NJ
Del./DE	N.M./NM
D.C./DC	N.Y./NY
Fla./FL	N.C./NC
Ga./GA	N.D./ND
Hawaii/HI	Ohio/OH
Idaho/ID	Okla./OK
Ill./IL	Ore./OR
Ind./IN	Pa./PA
Iowa/IA	R.I./RI
Kan./KS	S.C./SC
Ky./KY	S.D./SD
La./LA	Tenn./TN
Maine/ME	Texas/TX
Md./MD	Utah/UT
Mass./MA	Vt./VT
Mich./MI	Va./VA
Minn./MN	Wash./WA

W. Va./WV
Wis./WI

Wyo./WY

- **telephone numbers:** Set off the area code with a hyphen: 641-269-3400. Do not put the area code in parentheses, and do not use 1 in front of long distance numbers.
- **10th Avenue Tennis Courts**
- **theatre:** Spell it theatre, unless a specific company spells it theater.
- **time:** For even hours, drop the colon and the zeros to 7 a.m., unless you are doing a chart, in which case use: 00. It's always 7:30 a.m. Do not capitalize a.m. or p.m., but do use periods.
- **titles:** Titles of books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, films, television series, CDs, and plays are italicized. Chapter titles within books are set in quotation marks.
 - The titles of lectures, symposia, etc., are set within quotation marks, i.e., "Forgotten Terrains: Earth's Neglected Temperate and Subtropical Forests."
 - When a symposium title is followed by a lecture title, both are set within quotation marks, i.e., The symposium titled, "Grinnellians in the New Deal," will include a lecture titled, "Harry Hopkins: The Man and the Myth."
 - Titles of operas and oratorios are also italicized, but songs and short musical selections are put in quotes. Musical selections named by number or key (i.e., Quartet in A minor) are not italicized.
 - Capitalize named, distinguished, and endowed professorships.
 - Don't capitalize unofficial titles preceding the name. Example: comedian Jonathan Winters.
 - Do not capitalize designation of officers of a class, social organization, etc. Bob Smith is president of SGA.
 - See "professional titles."
- **State universities outside Iowa:** Use a hyphen to designate the location of a state university where needed, i.e., University of California-Berkeley.
- **universities in Iowa:** Do not give the location of the University of Iowa or Iowa State University.
- **underrepresented:** It's one word.

- **United States:** Spell out when used as a noun. Use U.S. only as an adjective.
- **vice-president:** Always use a hyphen for on-campus titles, i.e., Mickey Munley is the vice-president for communication and events. Please note “for” rather than “of” in this usage. This applies only to vice-presidents on campus. Capitalize the title only when it appears directly before the name, i.e., Vice-president for Communication and Events Mickey Munley.