Southwestern College Writing Style Guide

How to Use Style Guide

How to read entries

- Entries are listed in alphabetical order and in **boldface.** They represent the accepted word usage unless otherwise indicated.
- Plain text explains usage and style.
- Examples of correct and incorrect usage are in *italics.*

Example:

academic departments Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives: *the department of history, the English department.*

Career Education Capitalize Career Education when referring to the school that oversees workforce development programs: *the Career Education department includes nursing, police and recording arts.*

Style Guide

academic degrees

Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree*, a *master's,* etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science* or *associate degree.* See AP Stylebook.

academic titles

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *chancellor, chair, dean, etc.* when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

Lowercase modifiers such as *department Chair Jerome Wiesner.*

Campus Store

All references to the college's book and merchandise store.

Career Education

Academic courses and programs that integrate core academics with hands-on learning to create pathways to jobs and career advancement. Part of the School of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. Career Education involves a sequence of courses that integrates core academics with technical coursework to provide students with a pathway to jobs, career advancement or postsecondary education.

Never use *Career Ed., CTE, CE* or any other abbreviations.

See **Career Education.**

Cesar E. Chavez Student Services Center

Southwestern College's student services building, home to popular departments such as admissions, financial aid and counseling. Use full name and capitalize on first reference. Shortened names such as *the Chavez* and the *Student Services Center* are acceptable on second reference. Never use *One-Stop* or any variation in formal communication.

centers

See **Higher Education Centers**

Crown Cove Aquatic Center

Southwestern College facility located on the Silver Strand State Beach in Coronado. Capitalize and spell out on first reference. *Crown Cove* is acceptable on second reference.

colleges and universities

Capitalize and spell out the full name of all colleges and universities. Common designations can be used on second reference. Examples: *San Diego State University, SDSU; San Diego Mesa College, Mesa College; Point Loma Nazarene University, Point Loma.*

College for Kids

See also **Y.E.S. Academy**

Continuing Education

Southwestern College's educational offerings for community members to improve and learn new skills. Continuing Education offers a mix of noncredit and fee-based classes and services.

See also **schools of discipline.**

designations

Spell out and capitalize all federal and award designations. Refrain from using acronyms on second reference. Example: *Hispanic Serving Institution, Veteran Friendly Colleges.*

departments, offices and programs

Capitalize all proper names of departments, offices and programs. Capitalize the word department only if it is included in its proper name.

The Communications, Community and Government Relations Department; the communications department. School of Arts, Communication and Social Sciences; the arts department.

Commonly referred to acronyms are acceptable on second reference.

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services. EOPS.

See also **schools of discipline.**

district

Always spell out when used as a part of *Southwestern Community College District.* Do not capitalize when used alone. Example: *The district acquired federal CARES money.*

Governing Board

Acceptable on all references when referring to the elected representatives that create district policy. Use *Southwestern Community College District Governing Board* in printed materials when listing all board members or formal publications.

The Governing Board met in closed session last night. In a statement on behalf of the Governing Board, President Jaguar called for the support of the Associated Student Organization's efforts.

See also **Governing Board members.**

Governing Board members

Capitalize titles of all governing board members when they appear before their name, including *Dr.* with earned doctorate. Refer to [governing board webpage](#) for current titles. *Governing Board Vice President Johnny Jaguar, Governing Board President Dr. Sally Sunshine.*

Governing Board members are listed in alphabetical order. Use *Student Trustee* when referring to the elected student representative.

Higher Education Centers

Southwestern College extension campuses located across South County offering general education courses, student services and specialized programs. The current locations of each center are National City, Otay Mesa and San Ysidro. Capitalize title and location, spelling out on first reference and using *at* before the location. Examples: *Higher Education Center at National City, Higher Education Center at Otay Mesa, Higher Education Center at San Ysidro.*

Second reference should never use letter abbreviation *(HECNC),* rather use the *National City center* or *National City.*

See also **Crown Cove Aquatic Center.**

Jaguars

Capitalize when referring to Southwestern College's student body, campus community or specific athletic team. Example: *The Jaguars started the fall semester in-person after more than a year of online learning. The Jaguars softball team played their first away game of the season.*

Johnny Jaguar

Use full name when referring to Southwestern College's mascot.

learning communities

Capitalize all formal names of Southwestern College's learning communities.

schools of discipline

Spell out and capitalize the full name of Southwestern College's schools of discipline. Use *and* when possible and & when necessary in headlines, subheads and display text.

School of Arts, Communication and Social Sciences
School of Business and Technology
School of Continuing Education and Workforce Development
School of Counseling and Student Support Programs
School of Language, Literature and Humanities
School of Mathematics, Science and Engineering

School of Wellness, Exercise Science and Athletics

Superintendent/President

Capitalize *Superintendent/President* when included with their name. Use *Dr.* for those possessing an earned doctorate. *Superintendent/President Dr. Johnny Jaguar addressed students and employees at the meeting. President* is acceptable on second reference when used with their last name. *President Jaguar.*

Southwestern College

Spell out and use for all first references to the college; *Southwestern Community College District* is also acceptable. Spelled out is preferred usage, however, SWC can be used on second reference or on communication with limited space such as headlines, flyers or posters.

See **district**

SWC

See **Southwestern College**.

titles

Capitalize all formal and proper titles when they appear before a person's name. Lowercase titles when they appear after a person's name and when it is not their proper title. Example: *Public Information Officer Johnny Jaguar. Johnny Jaguar, Southwestern College's public information officer, returned the reporter's call. Southwestern College spokesperson Johnny Jaguar said in a press release today.*

Work-Based Learning

Work-Based Learning focuses on embedding career readiness into the classroom by connecting students with industry opportunities and hands-on experiences. Do not use *WBL* or any other abbreviations.

Y.E.S. Academy

Acceptable on all first references when referring to the Youth Excellence and Success Academy. A summer academic and enrichment program for fourth to 12th grade students and parents. Programs include College for Kids and Sally Ride Science.

Common AP style entries

composition titles

Place quotation marks around almost all composition titles, but not reference, newspaper or magazine names.

dates, months and years

Always use Arabic figures, without *st, nd, rd* or *th.*

Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.* and *Dec.*

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 2016 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month. The target date was Feb. 24, 2020, to complete the project.*

When a phrase refers to a month and day within the current year, do not include the year: *The hearing is scheduled for June 26.*

numbers

Generally, spell out numbers one through nine. Use figures for 10 or above and whenever preceding a unit of measure or referring to ages of people, animals, events or things.

Use figures for academic course numbers: *History 6, Philosophy 209*

serialized comma (Oxford comma)

Omit the serial comma except when it prevents misreading. Southwestern College has campuses in Chula Vista, National City, Otay Mesa and San Ysidro.

seasons

Lowercase *spring, summer, fall, winter* and derivations such as *springtime* unless part of a formal name: *Summer Olympics.*

time

Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *11 a.m., 1 p.m., 9-11 a.m., 11 a.m.-2 p.m.*

Avoid redundancies such as *10 a.m. this morning*.