Introduction

Our editorial guide is a reference tool to set campus-wide standards for grammar and punctuation and to help University communicators follow a style consistent and appropriate for print and electronic materials written for and about Michigan Technological University.

The guide covers items you might not find in the Chicago Manual of Style, which is used for University communications, or the Associated Press Stylebook, used for the news we send to worldwide media. It also indicates exceptions Michigan Tech makes to the stylebook—what we consider our own style. For example:

- Whenever possible we downstyle to be clear and readable. We avoid an alphabet soup of acronyms, long strings of formal titles, and overuse of exclamation points. We say "use" not "utilize."
- We are specific. We give exact figures instead of writing "a number of." We list specific services and activities instead of "and much more."
- We avoid trite phrases and clichés like "hands-on learning." We give the details. We show, not tell.
- We spell out numbers one through nine, and express numbers 10 and up numerically.
- We eliminate useless words: extra ofs, thats, and whiches, Note: and as noted, see below, following are, according to, pictured is, and other state-the-obvious phrases that are speed bumps for text-weary readers.

For spelling, style, use, foreign geographic names, and anything not mentioned in this guide or in the appropriate stylebook, refer to the latest edition of Merriam-Webster College Dictionary. Chicago and AP stylebooks are updated periodically. We'll update this guide and change University materials as practical. For example, if we are in the middle of a series of print publications when the style changes, we will complete the series with one, consistent style and update the series the next time.

The guiding principle in applying any style is to maintain a consistent editorial approach within a specific piece.

Contact the editorial director with style guide questions or comments and for more information about our brand messages, please see our brand guide mtu.edu/resources/brand/brand-guide.pdf.
Michigan Tech Standard Language

Michigan Tech Abbreviation
Use Michigan Technological University on first reference. After that, use Michigan Tech or shorten to Tech on and after the third reference. Do not use 'Michigan Tech University'. It leads to 'technical college' misconceptions. MTU is only acceptable for Athletics.

This applies to all University references including email, letters, forms, phone messages, signs, advertising, and apparel.

About Michigan Tech—Digital
Michigan Technological University is a leading public research university, home to 7,238 students from more than 60 countries around the world. Founded in 1885, the University offers more than 120 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Our beautiful campus in Michigan's Upper Peninsula overlooks the Keweenaw Waterway and is just a few miles from Lake Superior.

About Michigan Tech—Print
Michigan Technological University is a leading public research university, home to more than 7,000 students from 60 countries around the world. Founded in 1885, the University offers more than 120 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Our beautiful campus in Michigan's Upper Peninsula overlooks the Keweenaw Waterway and is just a few miles from Lake Superior.

About Houghton
The area's waters, forests, and snowfall (200+ inches annually) offer skiing, snowboarding, hiking, biking, and paddling. Historic downtown Houghton is active with locally owned shops, eateries, high-tech companies, music festivals, and parades. We embrace our size, climate, sense of adventure, and originality. Michigan Tech wouldn't be the same anywhere else on Earth—and we wouldn't have it any other way.

Commencement
They are referred to as Spring Commencement and Midyear Commencement. Don't capitalize commencement in the general sense.

Husky or Huskies
We are the Michigan Tech Huskies. We have Husky Spirit and the Huskies Pep Band is amazing.

Student ID Number
Michigan Tech ID numbers are referred to as the M number.

Abbreviations
Avoid abbreviations in running text, except when part of names, street addresses, courtesy titles, or academic degrees.

Although periods are used with some abbreviations, current trends in English are moving away from using them.

- CPA; SBE; GPA; USA; US Air Force; LTC (for Lt. Col.)
Academic Degrees
- Abbreviate and capitalize academic degrees when used following a name.
  - Bachelor of Science, BS
  - Master of Science, MS
  - Doctor of Philosophy, PhD
  - Master of Business Administration, MBA
  - Bachelor of Science in Engineering, BSE
  - Doctor of Education, EdD
  - Master of Education, MEd
  - Doctor of Arts, DA
  - Master of Engineering, MEng
- Abbreviations are also capitalized when used with the full, complete degree.
  - BS in Mechanical Engineering
  - PhD in Physics
- Dr. is for medical doctor only, not for PhD.

Ampersand
- Ampersands (&) should only be used for brand-specific words, Twitter, or in lists and titles.

Colleges/Schools
- College of Engineering, COE
- College of Sciences and Arts, CSA
- School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science, SFRES
- School of Business and Economics, SBE
- School of Technology, SOT

Departments
- Air Force ROTC, AFROTC
- Army ROTC, not abbreviated
- Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics, ME-EM department or ME-EM

Highways
- US Highway 41, US-41
- Michigan Highway 26, M-26

PI and Co-PIs
Principal Investigator and co-Principal Investigators spelled out without parenthetical abbreviation upon first reference. PI or co-PI on second reference.

States
States are spelled out. Postal abbreviations (MI, etc.) are only used in address forms.
- He lives in Houghton, Michigan.

Titles
These titles are abbreviated when preceding names.
- Dr.
- Mr.
- Ms.
• Mrs.
• Rev.
• Hon.
• St.

**United States**
• US or USA. No periods, except when the text is in all capital letters, then use U.S. for clarity.

**Miscellaneous**
• i.e., = that is
• e.g., = for example
• Senior Vice President, SVP
• terabyte, TB
• gigabyte, GB

**And**
• It is acceptable to begin sentences with *And*.
• Ampersand (&) should only be used for brand-specific words, Twitter, or in lists and titles.

**Buildings and Places**

**Campus Buildings**
Building list with building numbers and abbreviations:

1. Administration Building  
2. Michigan Tech Lakeshore Center  
3. ROTC Building  
4. Academic Office Building  
5. Electrical Energy Resources Center  
6. Dow Environmental Sciences and Engineering Building  
7. Alumni House  
8. Rozsa Center for the Performing Arts  
9. Walker Arts and Humanities Center  
10. Minerals and Materials Engineering Building  
11. Hamar House  
12. Grover C. Dillman Hall  
13. Fisher Hall  
14. Widmaier House  
15. J. R. Van Pelt and John and Ruanne Opie Library  
16. U. J. Noblet Forestry Building  
17. Chemical Sciences and Engineering Building  
18. R. L. Smith Building  
19. Student Development Complex
25 Sherman Field Press Box
27 Ford Center
28 Kanwal and Ann Rekhi Hall
30 Little Huskies Child Development Center
31 Douglass Houghton Hall
32 Daniell Heights Apartments
34 Memorial Union Building
37 Wadsworth Hall
38 West McNair Hall
40 East McNair Hall
41 Central Heating Plant
43 Lakeside Laboratory
44 Storage-Service
48 Hillside Place
50 Gates Tennis Center
69-80 Keweenaw Research Center
84 Harold Meese Center
95 Advanced Technology Development Complex
97 A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum
100 Great Lakes Research Center

- First Merit Bank Building
- John J. MacInnes Student Ice Arena or MacInnes Student Ice Arena
- Mont Ripley, not Mount or Mt.
- Student Financial Services Center is the formal name of the Financial Aid Office. Financial Aid or Financial Aid Office can be used informally.

Places
- Minnesota Duluth
- Alaska Anchorage
- Alaska Fairbanks
- Nebraska-Omaha
- Wisconsin-Madison
- Michigan-Ann Arbor
- Michigan-Flint
- Michigan-Dearborn

Country and Nation
- A “country” is a self-governing political entity.
- A “nation” designates a culture, but not sovereignty.
Capitalization

Academic Degrees
- Capitalize academic degrees when used following a name.
  - Jacqueline E. Huntoon, PhD
- Capitalize academic degrees and disciplines in full, complete use. Abbreviations are also capitalized when used with the full, complete degree.
  - Associate in Applied Science in Engineering
  - Associate in Humanities
  - Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences
  - BS in Mechanical Engineering
  - PhD in Physics
  - Master of Engineering with an environmental engineering concentration
- Note the full degree names: Master of Engineering; Master of Forestry, but
  - He is majoring in materials science and engineering.
  - She has a master's in physics and an associate's in humanities.

Boards and Committees
- Board of Trustees (Board on second reference)
- University Senate
- University committees and subcommittees do not require capitalization.
- The State of Michigan . . .

Alma Mater
- Hail Alma Mater (the song)
- Michigan Tech is my alma mater.

AM/PM
- 9 p.m., not 9:00 p.m.
- a.m., not AM (or small upper case)
- 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (with a hyphen)
- 8-11 a.m.
- 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (not 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)
- But, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

College and School
The College and the School are capitalized when referring to the College of Engineering, College of Sciences and Arts, School of Business and Economics, School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science, and the School of Technology.
- He was appointed dean of the College.
- The School has seen significant enrollment increases.

Co-op Program
Capitalize Cooperative Education Program but not co-op program.

Commencement
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Course Titles
Course titles are capitalized with or without course numbers.
- Introduction to Film; but, in a general sense, introductory film class
- CM3230 Thermodynamics for Chemical Engineers

Department and Office
Department and Office are capitalized in the full, formal use.
- Department of Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics; but not in ME-EM department or mechanical engineering-engineering mechanics department
- The Registrar's Office
- Admissions Office

Enterprise Program
- Enterprise Program for the overall program
- An Enterprise program for an individual one

Headlines
Capitalize headlines, but not articles, prepositions, or to-be verbs.
- John Gagnon Makes Trouble
- The End is Near or What

Named Professorships and Chairs
- He created the Jimi Hendrix Professorship in Music. (Notice it is not professor.)
- Jane Smith, Jimi Hendrix Professor and chair, music department.
- She holds the Jimi Hendrix Professorship and is chair of the Department of Music.

Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)
Principal Investigator and co-Principal Investigators spelled out without parenthetical abbreviation upon first reference. PI or co-PI on second reference.

President
Capitalize when it precedes a name.
- President Glenn Mroz
- Martha Sloan, president of the Senate

Programs
Capitalize as part of formal name, but programs otherwise.
- Summer Youth Programs
- There are many youth programs available.

Regions of the Country
Capitalize specific, named geographical areas.
- Midwest
- midwestern states

Student ID Number
Michigan Tech ID numbers are referred to as the M number.
Titles

- Capitalize all academic titles when used before a name.
  - Professor Craig R. Friedrich; but: Craig Friedrich, professor of mechanical engineering-engineering mechanics
  - Dean Tim Schulz; but: Tim Schulz, dean of the College of Engineering
- Do not capitalize if used in the general sense.
  - She had risen to the rank of professor.
  - He was appointed vice president.
  - She has a master's degree in physics.
- Italicize and capitalize Newsletter, Magazine, or Newspaper when it appears as the name of the publication.

University

University is capitalized when referring to Michigan Tech, but not university or universities in the general sense unless part of a formal title.

Vice President, Vice Provost

Do not hyphenate. Capitalize before a name; otherwise leave them lowercase.

ZIP Code

All capital letters, as it is an acronym for Zone Improvement Plan.

Word List

- CareerFEST
- PO Box in forms; PO box in text
- PS
- Résumé Blitz
- Social Security Number, also SSN
- spring break
- tweet
- ZIP Code

Dates, Times, Numbers

Dates

Spell out dates and include the day of the week and year for informational purposes.
- Wednesday, January 23, 2008; not January 23rd, 2008 or 1/23/08

Graduation Years

- Graduation years can be abbreviated to the last two digits preceded by an apostrophe.
- No punctuation
  - MS '92 PhD '09
  - BS English Literature '78 MS Rhetoric and Technical Communication '92
  - Jack Johnson '11 '15
  - Exception: early 1900s and late 1800s alumni, use full year: 1887, 1915

Time

- a.m./p.m. is correct in text/narrative. AM/PM is acceptable in design.
9 p.m., Saturday, April 28, 2012
- noon and midnight are preferable to 12 p.m. and 12 a.m.
- 5th is correct. Don’t use superscripts unless for scientific or technical accuracy.

**Numbers**
- Zero to nine are always spelled out; 10 and up are written as numerals except at the start of a sentence or for headlines.
- Spell out a figure when beginning a sentence even though numerals are used elsewhere in the text.
- Numbers of more than three figures are pointed off with commas, except SAT scores.
  - 1,259 women
  - $4,700,900
  - 1220 SAT
- "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2" (abbreviate number)

**Credit Hours**
Use numerals to refer to credit hours.
- 6 credits

**Percent, Percentage**
- Use the word percent instead of the symbol %.
- A numeral is used before the word percent, unless it comes at the beginning of a sentence.
- Percent refers to an exact number.
  - Thirty percent of their wages went to taxes.
  - The power play is running at 25 percent.
- Percentage is used when there is no exact number.
  - The percentage of their salaries that went to taxes was significant.

**Room Numbers**
Put the building name first before room numbers.
- Administration Building G20
- Fisher Hall 135

**Telephone Numbers**
Use hyphens in telephone numbers.
- 1-888-688-1885
- 906-487-2319

**Inclusive Language**
- They is the preferred pronoun to s/he.
- The Center for Diversity and Inclusion at Michigan Tech uses the abbreviation LGBTQIA* when referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and ally students.
- Be mindful of your audience and write with inclusive, culturally sensitive language. Michigan Tech's Center for Diversity and Inclusion offers resources and training.
Names and Titles

Academic Titles
- Capitalize all academic titles when used before a name.
  - Professor Craig R. Friedrich; but: Craig Friedrich, professor of mechanical engineering-engineering mechanics
  - Dean Tim Schulz; but: Tim Schulz, dean of the College of Engineering
- Do not capitalize if used in the general sense.
  - She had risen to the rank of professor.
  - He was appointed vice president.
  - She has a master's degree in physics.

Multiple Names
Female, then male, then last name.
- Gail and Glenn Mroz

Titles of Airplanes, Ships, Trains
Italicize
- RV Agassiz

Titles of People
- The following titles are abbreviated when preceding names.
  - Dr.
  - Mr.
  - Ms.
  - Mrs.
  - Rev.
  - Hon.
  - St.
- For readability, short titles can appear before the name. Longer titles should appear after the name.

Titles of Works
- Italicize the titles of books, plays, motion pictures, oratorios or operas, magazines, published documents, newspapers, periodicals, television series, and journals.
  - Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail
  - The New Yorker
  - Field of Dreams
  - The Simpsons
  - ACS Chemical Biology
  - Michigan Tech Magazine
  - Research
- Use quotation marks for titles of unpublished matter, parts of published works, articles from journals, single episodes from radio and television series, and titles of short musical compositions when used in text.
- Italicize and capitalize Newsletter when it appears as the name of the publication.
- If italics are not available, use underlines. If underlines are not available, capitalize the first letter of each word.
URLs
- Don’t use “http://www.” unless necessary for functionality.

Publications Checklist
- University Name—full name of the University appears on the front or back of the publication.
- Equal Opportunity Statement—Include EOS statement on all publications. Two versions are acceptable:
  - Michigan Technological University is an equal opportunity educational institution/equal opportunity employer, which includes providing equal opportunity for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.
  - Michigan Tech is an EOE which includes protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.
- URLs—Verify all URLs are correct.
- Spellcheck
- Add social media references, if applicable (hashtags, links, and/or icons).
- Do there appear to be any safety protocol issues in the photos? (if applicable)

Punctuation
- Punctuation following italic, bold, etc., should be the same style.

Accents
- a là uses the accent under the “tilde” (~), in the upper left-hand corner of the keyboard
- résumé uses Option+e (for Macs) and Control+e (for PCs)

Apostrophes
- In words showing joint possession, only the last word takes the possessive form.
  - secretary-treasurer's report
  - Jones and Company's product
  - John and Becky's child
- When two or more persons possess something individually, each of their names takes the possessive form.
  - the buyer's and seller's signatures
  - the dean's and the professors' offices
- Use an apostrophe to denote a contraction or omission of letters.
  - it is becomes it's
  - 1978 becomes (the Class of) '78 (PENDING decision to use full year or not)
- Use the apostrophe to form the plural of lowercase letters and symbols. It's not necessary for capital letters and numbers, including years.
  - p's and q's
  - As and Bs (grades)
  - IOUs
  - during the 1990s
- When a word ends with s, only add an apostrophe to the end to make it possessive.
  - Havens' not havens's
  - Its (possessive) not it’s.
- Year references do not need an apostrophe before the “s.”
  - 1990s
Bulleted Lists
- Depending on design, the first letter of the bulleted items may be capitalized or not. Maintain consistency.
- Precede the list by a colon if introductory statement is an independent clause.
- Punctuate full sentences, but maintain consistency.

Colon
- In lists, use a colon if the introductory statement is an independent clause.
  - There are many summer courses available:
    - Accounting
    - Thermodynamics
    - Calculus
- If the introductory statement is not an independent clause do not use the colon.
  - The fellows are
    - experts in their field
    - in demand across the nation
    - full of important information
- For more on lists, see *Chicago Manual of Style*, pp. 344–348

Comma, Serial Comma
- Include the comma before "including" and "as well as." But, do not use "as well as" when "and" would suffice.
- Macomb, Michigan (comma as an appositive)
- Wednesday, July 14, 2010
- et al (no periods, no comma if after one word)
- In 1979, the world continued to spin on its axis.
- Using a comma in introductory phrases is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on length, need for a pause, etc.
- No comma before Inc., but use one before degrees or certifications listed after a name.
  - Acme Co. Inc.
  - , PC
  - , MD
  - , PhD
- Michigan Tech uses the serial comma, the second comma in this example, except in news stories and Tech Today, which follow *Associated Press* style:
  - The Huskies defeated Northern, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

Ellipses
Use three with spaces before and after:
- We had to show the way . . . that was the end of the conversation.
- The meeting was just okay . . . the bitterness faded slowly.
- The beginning . . . is the end.

En Dash
- The En Dash is acceptable for design purposes, pages, and date listings, otherwise use a hyphen instead.
• Use a hyphen (-) instead for inclusive page references unless preceded by the word from, in which case to must be used.
  o 1998-99, 2002-04, 1999-2000, 1905-06 (note the 0 remains in years)
  o 3-11, 85-6, 113-6, 100-5, 1,002-8, 321-5, 455-501
• University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Minnesota-Duluth

Em Dash
• Do not use spaces on either side of the em dash.
• On Windows, Alt+0151 or Ctrl+Alt+minus; on a Mac Option+Shift+hyphen
• Use an em dash, also referred to as the dash, to precede a reference to an author following a direct quotation.
  o "I am simply a human being, more or less."—Saul Bellow, Herzog (1964)
• Use em dashes to set of clauses that are logically and structurally independent, also for amplifying or explaining.
  o Tonight's program—a program that has won national acclaim—is underwritten . . .
  o He had a plan to win the game—a plan he hoped would work.

Hyphen
• For hyphenated compounds in titles capitalize only the first element in hyphenated titles of works unless the second element is a proper noun or adjective.
  o Death-defying Feats by Nineteenth-century Tightrope Walkers
  o An All-American Girl: How a Non-English-speaking Immigrant Made Good
• Do not capitalize the second element if modifying the first element or both elements constitute a single word.
  o 20th-century literature
  o English-speaking people
  o first-year student
• When used as an adjective in a title, the number following the hyphen is lowercase.
  o Twenty-third Conference on Sludge
  o Twenty-first Century Literature
• Although modern practice tends toward deleting traditional hyphens (reestablish, toolmaker), they should be retained where they are used in the original title. Only capitalization and punctuation may be altered in a title.
• Hyphenate adjectival phrases formed of two or more words preceding the nouns modified where ambiguity might result.
  o well-known woman
  o first-class act
  o joint-stock company
  o matter-of-course attitude
  o solid-state circuit
  o land-use legislation
  o cross-cultural education
  o steady-state research
  o decision-making body
  o full-semester course
• Use a hyphen when the meaning varies with the absence of a hyphen.
  o re-cover and recover
  o re-create and recreation
• Hyphenate when the first vowel of the added word would suggest mispronunciation.
  o pro-ally
  o demi-equitant
  o ante-urban

• Do not hyphenate adjectives formed of two proper names having their own fixed meaning.
  o Old Testament times
  o New York subways

• Use when necessary for clarity.
  o more-rigorous academics (tougher)
  o more rigorous academics (more of them)

• Several words are hyphenated when they are used as an adjective, but open when used as a noun.
  o decision-making skills, good at decision making
  o critical-thinking pattern, it required critical thinking
  o cutting-edge design, the design was cutting edge
  o full-time, full time
  o man-made, man made
  o on-site, on site
  o problem-solving, problem solving

• Do not hyphenate -ly words, combinations of adverb and adjective, or adverb and participle unless ambiguity would result.
  o highly developed areas
  o the fallen tree blocked the road

• Compounds of non-words ordinarily do not require a hyphen, except when used with a proper noun. Consult Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary; if the compound does not appear there, use a hyphen.
  o non-alumni
  o non-civil engineering
  o nondegree-seeking student

• Do not hyphenate prefixes when joined to roots except in a combination with words beginning with their terminal vowel or sometimes when used with a w or a y.
  o biweekly
  o coauthor
  o coeducation
  o cocurricular
  o preprofessional
  o prelegal
  o postwar
  o coworker

• Hyphenate when self forms the first element of a compound.
  o self-conscious
  o self-denial

• Word List
  o $122 million contract
  o 3-D printing
  o Five percent solution
  o biofuel
  o birth date
  o campuswide, University-wide (one of the few -wide compounds that needs a hyphen)
- Center for Pre-College Outreach, pre-college programs
- co-edited, coauthor
- crazy smart
- cross country
- cross-cultural
- database
- e-learning
- e-newsletters
- ever-changing
- firsthand
- job site
- long-term
- MEEM building
- online
- postdoc
- powertrain
- pre-cruise
- re-enroll
- safe house
- semiconductor
- sing-along
- start-up (noun), start up (verb)
- takeout (noun), take out (verb), take-out (adjective)
- ultrahigh-performance editors; their achievement scores were ultrahigh
- vice president
- weeklong
- Wi-Fi
- year-end
- yearlong
- year-round

**Period**
- et al (no period)
- PO Box in forms; PO box in text (no period)

**Quotation Marks**
- Use quotation marks for articles and chapters.
  - "In the Warmth of the Dome."
- Use quotation marks for titles of unpublished matter, parts of published works, articles from journals, single episodes from radio and television series, and titles of short musical compositions when used in text.

**Spaces**
Use only single spaces after the period; avoid double spaces.
Social Media
A field guide ([mtu.edu/umc/services/web/docs/fieldguide.pdf](mtu.edu/umc/services/web/docs/fieldguide.pdf)) is available that provides information about writing for social media.

Web Writing
- Always try to link keywords. Don’t use:
  - "click here"
  - spelled out URLs
  - "website"
- URLs are all lowercase
- Avoid indicating left or right directionals as this changes depending on mobile device.
  - "Refer to the chart on the right."
  - "Using the navigation to the left . . ."

Touts
Touts are notable statistics using a graphic design.
- The stat should appear first, followed by a description.
  - 187 active research faculty
- Spell out large numbers when room allows. If you must abbreviate “thousand” or “million”, use a capital letter.
  - $60,000,000, $60 million, or $60M
  - 60,000, 60 thousand, or 60K
- In descriptions, use lowercase except for proper nouns or where words should normally be capitalized. No period at the end.
  - public university in Michigan for mid-career salaries of graduates
  - companies recruit on campus during Career Fairs
  - Study Abroad locations around the world

Words List
- class work
- coursework
- email
- fieldwork
- more than is preferred to over
- name tag
- Facebook News Feed, but newsfeed generically
- nonresident
- school work
- student athlete (not student-athlete)
- theatre major, theater building
- training or orientation is preferred to onboarding
- underrepresented (not under-represented)
- website