

St. John's College Editorial Style Guide

Updated February 2022

About This Guide

The St. John's Communications Office maintains this editorial style guide to provide consistency in all printed and online materials produced by and for the college. The guide addresses general style matters such as capitalization, spelling, grammar, and punctuation—as well as commonly used phrases, and St. John's-specific terms and preferences.

Additional Resources

This style guide uses the *Chicago Manual of Style* as its basis, although there are a few exceptions. The online version of the *Chicago Manual* is accessible to St. John's students, faculty, and staff who are logged in to the college's network at chicagomanualofstyle.org.

- AP Style may be used for press releases and other communication with the media
- Additional reference for usage and clarity is *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White
- For questions regarding spelling, hyphenation, or information not found elsewhere, refer to merriam-webster.com

The guide is intended to evolve, as language does, so please send suggestions for improvement to the Communications Office at communications@sjc.edu.

A

academic degrees

Capitalize abbreviated degrees without periods (BA, BS, JD, and PhD). Lowercase cum laude, magna cum laude and with honors, as well as bachelor's, master's, and doctorate (also MALA and MAEC)

From *Chicago Manual* 8.29: Names of degrees, fellowships, and the like are lowercased when referred to generically. See also 10.21.

a master's degree; a doctorate; a fellowship; master of business administration (MBA)

academic majors / names of academic degrees

Do not capitalize academic majors or course of study (i.e., history major or chemistry major) unless a major includes a proper noun (English major or American studies major)

academic (class) designations

Terms are lowercase: freshman *or* first-year student; sophomore, junior, and senior



ST JOHN'S
College

academic year

Follow rule for range of years: eliminate the initial repeated digits

2018–19 (connected by en dash)

Note: If three or more digits will change, use the entire number for both years: 1999–2003

It often looks better to use “to” (instead of an en dash) to connect numbers in a sentence but either are acceptable. See more: *date and time ranges*.

He attended the college from 1999 to 2003.

He attended the college 1999–2003.

acronyms, initialisms, and other abbreviations

Well-known acronyms and common abbreviations of names should be formed without periods: SJC, CEO, CIA, FBI, GPA, NATO and SAT

For those not widely known to the general public, spell out on the first mention. Acronyms that will be used later should be placed in parentheses after the first mention, e.g., Graduate Institute (GI), Student Instruction Committee (SCI) or Student Activities Center (SAC)

active voice

Use active voice whenever possible; in sentences with an action verb, the subject performs the action denoted by the verb (see *Chicago Manual* 5.118 for more)

active: The student read the book.

passive: The book was read by the students.

addresses

Use commas to set off street address, town/city/location, and state; do not use a comma between the state (use USPS abbreviations) and ZIP code:

You may reach us at 1160 Camino de Cruz Blanca, Santa Fe, NM 87505-4599.

Preferred: Spell out street names, and use full ZIP code (ZIP+4) when available; there may be instances where it looks better to spell out the state name instead of using abbreviation

administration

Lowercase in all uses: She worked in the Obama administration.

admissions

Plural in most uses, especially when referring to the Admissions Office; singular when referring to an offer of admission

African American

Not hyphenated. Acceptable for an American black person of African descent, but follow a person's expressed preference

ages

Use numerals; hyphenate if used as an adjective before a noun or as a substitute for a noun

His son is 3.

His son is 3 years old.

He has a 3-year-old son.

He's a 3-year-old.

Set off ages with commas in a sentence: Her daughter Minnie, 12, is an avid reader.

alumni

Preferred: Use graduate or alum since both are gender neutral; *secondary:* alumnus (male), alumna (female), alumni (all male or both sexes), and alumnae (all female)

Alumni Association Board (AAB)

Always spell out on first mention; do not refer to as "the board" unless it is clear that the reference is not to the St. John's College Board of Visitors and Governors (BVG); it is acceptable to use the acronym after it is placed in parentheses after the first mention, e.g., St. John's College Alumni Association Board (AAB)

alumni office

Acceptable reference for the Office of Alumni Relations (primarily based in Santa Fe with the director position but there is alumni staff in Annapolis as well)

a.m. / p.m.

Always lowercase with periods; for time of day, use numbers except for noon and midnight; use a colon to separate hours from minutes—do not include minutes if they are "00"

List start and end times as 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or 8 to 10 a.m.

Use time zone abbreviations when it may not be clear where (therefore, when) something is happening—such as in an email promoting the JohnnieCast: (EST) for Eastern Standard Time, (EDT) for Eastern Daylight Time, (MST) for Mountain Standard Time, or (MDT) for Mountain Daylight Time; if referencing the time zone alone, spell out and lowercase: The event in Annapolis is set for eastern standard time so there will be a two-hour difference in Santa Fe.

and / & (ampersand)

Spell out "and" in all uses except for the names of firms, colleges, etc., where the ampersand is part of the formal name: We saw Jack and Jill. They attend Johnson & Wales University.

Annapolis Group

A group of approximately 130 independent liberal arts colleges that meet each June in Annapolis; St. John's is a member of this group (see full list of colleges at annapolisgroup.org)

apostrophe / possessive form of most nouns

From *Chicago Manual* 7.16: The possessive of most *singular* nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*. The possessive of *plural* nouns (except for a few irregular plurals, like *children*, that do not end in *s*) is formed by adding an apostrophe only. For the few exceptions to these principles, see 7.20–22. See also 5.20.

the horse's mouth
a bass's stripes
puppies' paws
children's literature
a herd of sheep's mysterious disappearance

Do not use an apostrophe with the numeric format for years (i.e., 1990s *not* 1990's); to indicate an omission of numbers, the apostrophe should point toward what is missing: He went to high school in the '80s.

Generally, do not use an apostrophe to denote St. John's class years (*see class years entry*); the exception is when neither Annapolis or Santa Fe is listed: Edward E. Duke III ('17)

It should also be noted that we typically use directional (also known as "smart" or "curly") apostrophes and quotation marks. "Straight" ones should only be used in reference to measurement, e.g., feet and inches (4'6" and not 4'6"), or to degrees of longitude or latitude

Arcadia (campus dog)

Arcadia "Cadie" Spector, a Parson Russell Terrier, was appointed the Annapolis campus dog in 2006

Asian American

Not hyphenated. A person of Asian birth or descent who lives in the United States. When possible, refer to a person's country of origin; follow the person's expressed preference

assure / ensure / insure

To *assure* a person of something is to make him or her confident of it; to *ensure* that something happens is to make certain that it does, and to *insure* is to issue an insurance policy (according to AP Style); other authorities, however, consider *ensure* and *insure* interchangeable

axolotl / platypus / mascot

Although the college does not have an official mascot, it does have a few unofficial ones—the most prominent being the axolotl and the platypus

B**Barr-Buchanan Center**

Hyphenated and capitalized; refers to building on Annapolis campus where most graduate classes are held; when using the acronym later, place it in parentheses after the first mention

Graduate Institute classes are held in the Barr-Buchanan Center (BBC).

Board of Visitors and Governors

Acceptable for the St. John's College Board of Visitors and Governors; always spell out—avoid the use of BVG; for subsequent reference, use board (lowercase)

boathouse (Hodson Boathouse)

One word; capitalize when using with Hodson on first reference to refer to the building on the Annapolis campus; for subsequent reference, use boathouse (lowercase)

Bhagavad Gita

Capitalize two words; on second reference: the Gita. The name means “Song of the Divine One,” Bhagavad meaning “the Divine One.” (It is a sacred Hindu scripture)

From *Chicago Manual* 8.103: Names of scriptures and other highly revered works are capitalized but not usually italicized (except when used in the title of a published work).

Bible

Capitalize: Students read the Bible as part of the curriculum at St. John's. Uppercase books within the Bible, such as the Book of Job, Book of Revelation (NOT Revelations), etc.

From *Chicago Manual* 8.103: Names of scriptures and other highly revered works are capitalized but not usually italicized (except when used in the title of a published work).

billions / millions

Always use with figures: \$1 billion; with large numbers in the millions and billion), do not go beyond two decimal places (1.25 million people)

bookstore

St. John's College Bookstore: One word, uppercase as part of full name; when using alone, lowercase (*see popular names for more*)

C**Cadie**

See *campus dogs*

campus dogs

Arcadia “Cadie” Spector, a Parson Russell Terrier, was appointed the Annapolis campus dog in 2006

campuswide

Do not hyphenate; also: statewide, nationwide, worldwide

capital, capitol

Most references will be for capital as a city where a seat of government is located; do not capitalize: Annapolis and Santa Fe are both state capitals.

A capitol is a building in which a legislative body meets, or where functions of state government occur; it is capitalized only when referencing the building in which the U.S. Congress meets in Washington, DC (and in other related references such as Capitol Hill or Capitol Police).

capital campaign

Refers to the college’s intensive fundraising effort that will span a defined time period with the goal of raising a specified amount of money to meet varied needs

The capital campaign will kick off in September 2018.

capitalization

Capitalize only formal or specific names; when referring to St. John’s College without the full name, always use lowercase (*see college entry for examples*)

When in doubt, use lowercase, especially when a word’s meaning is generic. Refer to *Chicago Manual of Style* or Merriam-Webster for specific examples; capitalizing an entire word or phrase for emphasis is rarely appropriate (*see headlines entry for more*)

For the capitalization of combined plural nouns used in names, lowercase the common noun elements in all plural uses:

He’s worked at St. John’s and Williams colleges.

The Annapolis campus is flanked by St. John’s and King George streets, and College Avenue connects the two streets.

career services

Lowercase when used generally, e.g., St. John’s provides help to students and alumni with career services; capitalize when referring to the Career Services Office in Annapolis; note the office in Santa Fe is known as the Office of Personal and Professional Development

century

Do not capitalize. Spell out first through ninth: eighth century; 20th century. Hyphenate when

used as an adjective, e.g., 19th-century literature. *Note:* superscript is not used (i.e., 18th century *not* 18th century)

class year

For all class years of 1968 and beyond, identify past or future St. John's graduates by placing in parenthesis an abbreviation for their campus—either "A" for Annapolis or "SF" for Santa Fe—along with the year of graduation, or the year in which they will (or would have) graduated based on the date they matriculated.

For graduate students, add GI to denote Graduate Institute (master's in liberal arts) and EC (master's in Eastern Classics).

For Annapolis graduates in the Class of 1968 and earlier, use "Class of" plus the year of graduation in parentheses.

Joanna Sweeney (A87) and Alexis Jones (SF01, EC05)

Jane Smith (SFGI75) and John Doe (AGI00)

Francis Scott Key (Class of 1796) and John Chase (Class of 1956)

Exception: To portray St. John's as one college, there may be instances where the specific campus is not included with the class year.

Generally, do not use an apostrophe to denote St. John's class years; the exception is when neither Annapolis nor Santa Fe is listed: Edward E. Duke III ('17)

classics

Lowercase as in "the classics" or classical studies; used to refer to the study of classical antiquity of or relating to the ancient Greeks and Romans or their philosophy, history, or culture

coffeehouse

One word

colon (:)

Standard practices to increase ease of reading should be followed for colons used to clarify or direct attention to whatever comes next such as a list, explanation, quotation, or amplification (test to see if you can replace the colon with "namely"); use one space after a colon

The rules are the same whether writing lists or sentences: use a colon when you could substitute the word "namely" for the colon and after something that could be a complete sentence on its own

Generally, the first word following the colon should be lowercased if the words after the colon form a dependent clause and they should be capitalized if the words form an independent clause that can stand on its own. It is advisable to not use a colon after a sentence fragment.

Johnnies have two favorite hobbies: reading and discussing what they read.

How to punctuate and capitalize the items in a list depends on whether they are individual words, phrases, or clauses (and whether any of the items contain complete sentences). For a vertical bulleted list that is treated like a sentence, use a colon to introduce the list and then commas after each lowercased item except for the last one when a period should be used. When the list is not treated as a sentence, capitalize each item listed after the colon and do not use any punctuation.

The text contained several errors:

- sentence fragments,
- subject-verb disagreement, and
- misplaced or dangling modifiers.

There will be fun events held during Homecoming:

- Reception
- Banquet
- Faculty and Alumni Lunch
- Sunday Brunch

Colons are also used between the parts of a numerical expression of time in hours and minutes (as in 4:30) or in hours, minutes, and seconds (5:25:30); or in a bibliographical reference; or in a ratio where it is usually read as “to” (8:1 is read as “eight to one”)

college

Lowercase, when referring to St. John’s College without the full name:

St. John’s College was founded in 1696 as King William’s School.

The college was chartered in 1784.

College, The

Title of the St. John’s College alumni magazine; always italicize; all inquiries regarding the magazine should be referred to the Communications Office

collegewide

Also: campuswide, statewide, nationwide, worldwide

Collegium (event)

Capitalized; held each semester on both campuses, Collegium is a chance for students, faculty, and staff to perform musical numbers for the St. John's community

comma (also series comma or Oxford comma)

Standard practices to increase ease of reading should be followed for comma usage; however, *Chicago Manual* strongly recommends when a conjunction joins the last two elements in a series of three or more, a comma—known as the serial or series comma or the Oxford comma—should appear before the conjunction to prevent ambiguity.

She posted pictures of her parents, the president, and the vice president.

commencement

Lowercase, unless in formal usage; e.g., Students are looking forward to commencement.

St. John's College's 226th Commencement in Annapolis was held indoors in 2018.

Lydia Polgreen (A97) spoke at Santa Fe's 51st Commencement in 2018.

compound modifier

Also called a compound adjective because it is a compound of two or more attributive words (more than one word that together modify a noun)

Hyphens are used to link all the words (except the adverb *very* and all adverbs ending in *-ly*) preceding a noun: a full-time job, a first-semester text, but not "a very hot day" or "a doubly delicious flavor"

Some phrases are known as open compounds and don't need a hyphen because there is no ambiguity: "high school students" or "chocolate chip cookies"

comprise / compose / consist

Often confused: To *comprise* means "to be made up of, to include" (e.g., the whole comprises the parts); to *compose* is to "make up, to form the substance of something" (e.g., the parts compose the whole); the phrase *comprised of*, though increasingly common, is poor usage; instead, use *composed of* or *consisting of*

course load

Two words

courtesy titles (Mr., Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mx.)

Although courtesy titles are commonly used in the classroom at St. John's, avoid using these titles in communications; use first and last name on first reference last names or pronouns (preferred by the subject) on second reference

In the instance where subjects have the same last name, first and last names should be used on all references to differentiate between them

Community Seminars

Uppercase on all references; note that these are held in both Santa Fe and Annapolis

convocation

Lowercase; ceremonial assembly to welcome new members of the college community held on both campuses: the entire freshman class and new Graduate Institute students are part of convocation, during which each of them signs the college register, shakes the president's hand and receives a book to be used in class

D

DC

Acceptable abbreviation for Washington, DC; do not use periods

dashes

Use an em dash (—) to set off an abrupt break or interruption, or to announce a long appositive or summary. Do not set off em dashes with spaces:

Her role at the nature conservatory—feeding and caring for koala bears—is rewarding.

Use an en dash (–), which is half the size of an em dash but longer than a hyphen, to connect numbers; do not set off en dashes with spaces

Read chapters 4–6.

(For more, see Chicago Manual 6.75, Hyphens and dashes compared.)

dates

When used in a sentence, spell out the full month name with numerals for the day; do not use st, nd, rd, or th (and superscripts should never be used)

Only include the year when the event occurs in the past or there may be confusion about which year something is happening, and then set off the year with commas:

The meeting will be next fall on October 5, 2019, in the admissions office.

Spell out the month when using alone or with a year:

He arrives in October; McDowell Hall renovations will be completed in March 2018.

When not used in a sentence (e.g., for an invitation or in a table of data) and space is tight, the following months may be abbreviated: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.

date and time ranges

Ranges for dates and times may be signified with either *from ... to* or an en dash (–, shorter than an em dash but longer than a hyphen), but be consistent and do **not** mix the two forms.

The art gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The museum is open 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

[**NOT** The museum is open from 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.]

Johnnie attended the college from 1981 to 1985.

Johnnie attended the college 1981–85.

[**NOT** Johnnie attended the college from 1981–85.]

decades

Acceptable to either spell out (the eighties, the nineties) or use numbers (the 1980s, the '90s); either way, be consistent and ensure the apostrophe is facing toward what is missing

departments

Lowercase when written informally (the physics department); capitalize full name (the Department of Physics); note that some say St. John's does not have "departments" so the same rules apply to administrative offices

directions / regions

Lowercase north, south, northwestern, etc., when they indicate a compass direction: They traveled west.

Specific regions should be capitalized: They traveled to the East Coast; Santa Fe is in the Southwest.

Capitalize words such as northern, southern, eastern, and western when they refer to the people in a region or to their political, social, or cultural activities: The curriculum focuses on the most important books and ideas of Western civilization.

Do not capitalize these words when they merely indicate general location or refer to the geography or climate of the region.

disability

Consult [Disability Language Style Guide](#) to find the appropriate language to use when writing about people living with disabilities (*see handicap*)

dollars

Preferred: Always use figures and the monetary symbol "\$"

Don Rag

Instead of receiving grades via a traditional report card, Johnnies meet with their tutors at a "Don Rag" to receive an oral report of their progress

dormitories

Dorm is also acceptable, as is residence hall or residences. Dorm names are always capitalized.

In Annapolis: Humphreys Hall (1837), Chase-Stone House (1857), Paca Carroll House (1857), Pinkney Hall (1858), Randall Hall (1903), Campbell Hall (1954), Gilliam Hall (2004), and Spector Hall (2006); use full name on first reference (e.g., Randall Hall, and then just Randall on second)

In Santa Fe, there are three main residential areas on campus:

Lower dorms (includes the Winiarski Center)

Upper dorms

Suites/apartments

Lower Dormitory Complex residence halls honor the Muses of Greek mythology:

Calliope, Clio, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Terpsichore, Thalia, and Urania

Upper Dormitory Complex residence halls feature names of prominent donors:

Meem, Driscoll, Murchison, Kirby, Huffman, Anderson, McCune, Wagner, and Jones

Winiarski Center (2012) residence halls have character names from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*:

Ferdinand, Ariel, and Miranda

The suites and apartments in Santa Fe feature names of local wildflowers but these names are not commonly used. For reference, they are: Yarrow (Suite 1), Sunflower (Suite 2), Aster (Suite 3), Globemallow (Suite 4), Blue Gamma (Suite 5), Filaree (Apartments 1-4), Mullein (Apartments 5-7), and Gilia (Apartments 8-10).

don rag / conference

Lowercase in all references; the don rag is a form of student evaluation where tutors discuss a student's progress and any areas for improvement, applicable to undergraduates: freshman year through junior year (The conference is an alternative available to juniors.)

Dr.

The college does not generally use courtesy titles before names in editorial copy; degree abbreviations may be used for those with medical degrees, e.g., Stephen Forman, MD, or those holding academic or honorary doctorates, e.g., Jane Doe, PhD

E

Earth / earth

Use *Chicago Manual* guidelines; in nontechnical contexts the word *earth*, in the sense of our planet, is usually lowercased when preceded by *the* or in such idioms as “down to earth” or “move heaven and earth.” When used as the proper name of our planet, especially in context with other planets, it is capitalized, and *the* is usually omitted

Eastern Classics

Always capitalize both words; use “Eastern Classics (EC)” on first reference, and then EC is acceptable on subsequent references; sometimes referenced as Master of Arts in Eastern Classics (MAEC)

Use EC with class year (and no apostrophes): George Smith (EC17)

The master's program in Eastern Classics is only offered at the Graduate Institute in Santa Fe; established as a certificate program in 1994 and as a master's program in 1996; requires three semesters and study in Sanskrit or Classical Chinese (also known as Literary Chinese)

ebook

One word, no hyphen

ecommerce

One word, no hyphen

ellipsis (...)

Note exception to *Chicago Manual*: use three periods (...) with a space before and after, not spaced out (...)(. . .)

Sometimes called an omission, an ellipsis indicates where words were removed from direct quotations; they should be used sparingly

Ellipses are always set off by spaces: “The sea was angry ... but we found our way ashore.”

Try to avoid at the beginning or end of quotations but ellipses at the end of a sentence follow the period and are set off by a space on either side:

“Life is long. ... And we will enjoy it.”

Note that the first word after an ellipsis is capitalized if it begins a new grammatical sentence.

email (also ebook, ecommerce, and newsletter)

Preferred style to list St. John's email addresses (IT sets this up to work for all accounts):

firstname.lastname@sjc.edu

The word email is not hyphenated and is always lowercase—except when it begins a sentence

emeritus, emerita (plural emeriti)

Refers to a person retired from professional life but permitted to retain as an honorary title the rank of last position held (e.g., tutors emeriti)

Check with individual on preference: emeritus (male) or emerita (female)

Capitalize before the name and as part of endowed title

President Emeritus Christopher B. Nelson

Tutor Emeritus Elliott Zuckerman

Tutor Emerita Jane Doe

Energieia

A student-run literary magazine in Annapolis; italicize title

newsletter

One word, no hyphen

enormity

Defined as wicked—not very, very big

ensure / assure / insure

To *assure* a person of something is to make him or her confident of it; to *ensure* that something happens is to make certain that it does, and to *insure* is to issue an insurance policy (according to AP Style); other authorities, however, consider *ensure* and *insure* interchangeable

exclamation point (!)

Avoid using; if part of a quote or otherwise necessary, use only one mark sparingly after an interjection or exclamation to indicate strong feeling

F**faculty / tutors**

Faculty at St. John's are called "tutors" because professors "profess," but at St. John's the faculty facilitate conversation in the classroom

When referring to faculty, do not capitalize “tutor” before or after a name for the same reason we do not capitalize “student” before or after a name

fall (seasons)

Names of seasons are always lowercase (also: spring, winter, summer); except when referring to a semester, typically only for admissions or referring to the academic year when clarity or emphasis is needed and then it’s acceptable to capitalize and use year: Fall 2018

Febbies

Retro term—no longer used—described students who matriculated at the start of the winter semester; the final Febbies matriculated in winter 2006 in Annapolis

In Santa Fe, there is the Spring Freshman Program, where students are called “January Freshmen” as part of the January Freshman (JF) program

fewer vs. less

“Fewer” applies to matters of number and modifies plural nouns; “less” applies to matters of degree, value, or amount and modifies collective nouns, mass nouns, or nouns denoting an abstract whole

“Less” is more likely than “fewer” to modify plural nouns when distances, sums of money, and a few fixed phrases are involved

Fine Arts Building

Building in Santa Fe; avoid FAB acronym

first-year

Hyphenated; may be used as a noun or adjective to replace freshman or freshmen

foreign words

Use plain text (not italicized or placed in quotes) for foreign words, e.g., alma mater, bon voyage, resume, croissant, and plein air; avoid using foreign words that are not widely known; if you must use them, explain: We dined on bulgogi (Korean marinated beef) and galbi (ribs).

fractions

Spell out and hyphenate when necessary

Three-quarters of the class attended; A fifth of the class attended.

freshman / freshmen (plural)

Refers to a first-year student; freshman is a singular noun and freshmen is plural

He is a freshman and is living in a house downtown with two other freshmen.

When used as an adjective, freshman is always singular.

All of the freshmen participate in the Freshman Chorus.

Friday night lectures

Lectures are organized by the dean's office and held on Friday nights; students are strongly encouraged to attend (not mandatory); lectures are typically open to the public and free; they are known as the Formal Lecture Series in Annapolis and the Dean's Lecture Series in Santa Fe

full time / part time

Do not hyphenate when using as an adverb but hyphenate as an adjective before the noun:

She is a full-time tutor; His cousin teaches part time.

fundraise / fundraising / fundraising

No dash

G

Gadfly, The

The student newspaper in Annapolis; capitalize and italicize title

Graduate Institute

Established in 1967 in Santa Fe originally as a summer program for teachers, it was established in 1977 in Annapolis; acronyms that will be used later should be placed in parentheses after the first mention, e.g. The Graduate Institute (GI) is currently enrolling students for the Eastern Classics program.

grandchild / granddaughter / grandson

Hyphenate great-grandchild; step-grandson

gray (not grey)

Preferred spelling is gray

Great Books

Capitalized in all uses

guerilla seminars

Small, informally organized seminars on particular works are often held with a small group of students and no tutor, although sometimes a tutor will participate

H

handicap / handicapped

Avoid using handicap and handicapped when describing a person; instead, refer to the person's specific condition whenever possible; the terms are still widely used when citing laws, regulations, places, or things (such as handicapped parking); *see disability*

hashtag (#)

Used to tag conversations/content in social media, e.g., #stjohnscollege, #johnnielife; indicated by the number or pound sign (#); use according to current best practices; *see number sign*

headlines / headings

Typically capitalize the first letter of each word in a headline, heading, or title

Unless they are the first word, do not capitalize:

Articles (a, an, the)

Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for)

Short words (fewer than 5 letters; capitalize those with 5 or more letters)

Prepositions (at, by, from)

For sub-headlines—or a dek, for printed magazine: the first letter of the first word is capitalized; no punctuation is used

health care

Two words, no hyphen

high school

No hyphen, whether a noun or adjective

She is a high school guidance counselor.

St. John's offers the Summer Academy for high school students.

Homecoming Weekend

Capitalize when referring to Homecoming Weekend or St. John's College Homecoming or Homecoming 2018; lowercase homecoming in all other uses

homepage

Always one word; the introductory or main page of a website

Homerathon (event)

Capitalized; students read aloud either the Odyssey or the Iliad (typically alternating each year) throughout the day, starting in the morning and ending late at night

homeschool, homeschooled, homeschooling

One word, not hyphenated

honorary alumni

Use “H” followed by class year, with no campus abbreviation; e.g., Jeremy Shamos (H03)

hyphens / hyphenation

Use to divide or compound words, word elements, or numbers; can be used to avoid ambiguity or prevent duplicated vowels or triple consonants

To create a compound modifier: Use to link all the words (except the adverb very and all adverbs ending in -ly) preceding a noun: a full-time job, a first-semester text, a very hot day, a doubly delicious flavor

When using a string of modifiers before a noun, put the modifier in quote marks instead of using hyphens, for clarity:

Her scientific achievements earned her the “Woman of the Year” award.

To use in suspensive form: a 10- to 20-year cycle; but a \$5 million to \$6 million renovation

Exceptions: Unless the Merriam-Webster dictionary specifies, do not hyphenate

For numbers: Use to separate numerals [but use en dash to indicate a numeric range]

Odds: He has a 3-1 chance.

Ratios: The student- teacher ratio is 8-1.

Scores and vote tabulations: The Greenwaves won 3-2.

Fractions that are spelled out: Three-fifths of the students participated.

When large numbers are spelled out especially at the beginning of a sentence, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in -y to the next word: Sixty-six (but twelve hundred)

For compound proper nouns, use to designate dual heritage: Italian-American; Australian-Czech

Exceptions: Native American, African American, French Canadian, and Latin American are not hyphenated

|

i.e., e.g.

Use i.e. to mean “that is” and use e.g. to mean “for example”

Use periods and set off in commas

War and Peace is a lengthy text, i.e., students need extra time to finish it.

Korean food is spicy, e.g., red pepper soup and hot pepper paste.

infinitives, split

Defined as an infinitive with *to* having a modifier between the *to* and the verb (as in "to really start"); may be split, but should be avoided if possible

in-law

Always use hyphens around "in" (father-in-law or mother-in-law); if you're talking about more than one, the first word should be plural: brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law

Inc.

Capitalized; use as an abbreviation in place of "Incorporated" in proper business names; do not follow with a comma [same rules apply to Corp. or Co.]

Note that many business owners prefer to use a comma before "Inc." to set apart their business name so pay attention to how a business refers to themselves and be consistent in all uses

Apple Inc. released the new iPhone.

The book may be purchased at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Inc.

initials

Use a period followed by a space after an initial in personal names: Christopher B. Nelson; when there is more than one initial, there is typically no space after a period between initials unless specified; be consistent

insure / ensure / assure

To *assure* a person of something is to make him or her confident of it; to *ensure* that something happens is to make certain that it does, and to *insure* is to issue an insurance policy (according to AP Style); other authorities, however, consider *ensure* and *insure* interchangeable

intercollegiate sports

On the Annapolis campus, intercollegiate sports include: crew, croquet, fencing, and sailing; in Santa Fe, archery is an intercollegiate sport

intramurals

Acceptable way to reference intramural sports; students, staff, and faculty on each campus are assigned to an intramural sports team; teams play each other in multiple sports, including Ultimate, soccer, basketball, "reasonball," handball, and volleyball

internet

Lowercase; note that the capitalized form “Internet” is still commonly seen but the lowercase form is gaining more widespread use

italics

Use as indicated in style guide, *see titles*; use sparingly for emphasis

J**January Freshman Program (Spring Freshman Program)**

Santa Fe students who matriculate in January as part of the Spring Freshman Program; students are called “January Freshmen” as part of the January Freshman (JF) program

Johnnie, Johnnies

Used to refer to St. John’s College students and alumni; [**NOT** Johnny]

Johnnie Chair

The same wooden chairs are used in all classrooms on each campus; called the “Johnnie Chair,” each is made by E.A. Clore Sons Inc., a family-owned woodworking company in Virginia

JohnnieCast

A live community forum for St. John’s College alumni held via telephone; organized and hosted by the Office of Alumni Relations

How it works: the college uses information in our database to call alumni at the landline phone number on file for each alum; to join the call, alumni simply answer the phone and stay on the line to participate; to ask a question or comment—or take part in polls—instructions will be provided and listeners may use keypad prompts; those who aren’t alumni may still participate by calling in or joining via a livestream on the internet

Jr. (and other suffixes)

Suffixes are not preceded (nor followed) by a comma unless specified by the individual or historical precedence

Martin Luther King Jr.

Cal Ripken Jr.

K**King William Players**

Each word is capitalized; NOT “King William’s Players”; refers to the student-run theater group in Annapolis.

Kunai

Capitalized; refers to the women's sports league in Annapolis that was founded and named by some of the women of St. John's; women can participate in both Kunai and intramural sports; (loosely translates to "hell's bitches")

L

lab, laboratory

Both lab and laboratory are acceptable, depends largely on audience and context; St. John's offers a three-year laboratory program where each section consists of 14 to 16 students working under the guidance of a tutor with the help of more advanced students serving as assistants; labs meet twice a week with a longer session for experiments and a shorter session for discussion; freshmen study biology and chemistry, juniors focus on physics, and seniors explore biology, genetics, and physics

less vs. fewer

"Less" applies to matters of degree, value, or amount and modifies collective nouns, mass nouns, or nouns denoting an abstract whole; "fewer" applies to matters of number and modifies plural nouns

"Less" is more likely than "fewer" to modify plural nouns when distances, sums of money, and a few fixed phrases are involved

LGBTQ

Acronym acceptable on first reference and thereafter to stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender—and the Q may stand for queer, questioning, or both

longtime

One word

M

mascot / axolotl / platypus

Although the college does not have an official mascot, it does have a few unofficial ones—the most prominent being the axolotl and the platypus

midshipman, midshipmen

Lowercase midshipman (singular) and midshipmen (plural) when referring to students—men and women—who are officers in training at the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) in Annapolis; capitalize when used as a military rank as part of a formal title before an individual's name

Midshipman 1st Class John Q. Jones is the captain of Navy's croquet team.

The Johnnies beat the midshipmen, 3-2, in this year's Annapolis Cup.

USNA preference is for midshipman or midshipmen [NOT shortening to middie(s) or mid(s)]

millennial

Lowercase; defined as “of or relating to a millennium”

This term is often used to reference a person reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century (also sometimes known as Generation Y) but there are not precise dates for this generational demographic cohort, they can range from birth years in the early 1980s to mid-1990s to early 2000s

millennium

Period of 1,000 years; often misspelled; millennia or millenniums are both acceptable plural forms

millions / billions

Always use with figures: \$25 million; with large numbers in the millions and billion), do not go beyond two decimal places (1.25 million people)

the Mitchell Gallery, Elizabeth Myers

Art gallery on the Annapolis campus; full name is rarely used, most often referred to as the (lowercase) Mitchell Gallery; *preferred*: the Mitchell Gallery at St. John’s College

Moon, The

The student newspaper in Santa Fe; italicize title

money

Always use figures; for dollars, use the “\$” sign: \$5 book or \$50 million; always spell out cents, i.e., 10 cents or a 5-cent tax

more than vs. over

Use “more than” for amounts

He has more than five flowers. [**NOT** He has over five flowers.]

More than 250 attended. [**NOT** Over 250 attended.]

mph

Stands for miles per hour; mph acceptable on first reference without spelling out

MOTH

Acronym for Music on the Hill, a series of summer concerts on the Santa Fe campus; always spell out the first mention with acronym placed in parentheses, e.g., Music on the Hill (MOTH)

multicultural

Not hyphenated

N

names

Use first and last name for initial reference, last name for subsequent reference

Although courtesy titles (Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs., Mx.) are commonly used in the classroom at St. John's, avoid using these titles in communications; use first and last name on first reference last names or pronouns (preferred by the subject) for subsequent reference; see *courtesy titles*

In the instance where subjects have the same last name, first and last names should be used on all references to differentiate between them

For suffixes (Jr., Sr., III, etc.), commas are not preceded (nor followed) by a comma unless specified by the individual or historical precedence

Martin Luther King Jr.

Cal Ripken Jr.

John Smith III

nationwide

Do not hyphenate; also: campuswide, statewide, worldwide and collegewide

nonfiction

No hyphen

nonprofit

No hyphen; do not use "not-for-profit"

number (No.) / number sign

Use No. as the abbreviation for number when referencing a ranking or other numbers, do not use the number or pound sign "#" since that is commonly known as a hashtag

St. John's was ranked No. 1 by its student body.

numbers

General rule is to spell out single-digit numbers (one through nine) unless the number begins a sentence; use numerals for 10 and higher

Exception: Do not spell out single-digit numbers in dates, and try to be consistent in either spelling out or using numerals within the same sentence

Addresses: 9 West 57th St.

Ages: a 5-year-old girl, she is 5

Dates: June 2

Decades: the '80s, the 1990s, or the seventies (see *decades*)

Millions / billions: 2 billion people

Money: 3 cents, \$5, \$2.50

Percentages: 4 percent

Ratios: 10-1

Always spell out a number when it begins a sentence, except in the case of years

Four hundred people attended the event.

1973 was a good year.

Use commas in numbers larger than 1,000, except when referring to years

The same rules apply when numbers appear in a quote, unless the number was spelled out when it was provided as a written quotation (use quote exactly as it was provided or seek permission to edit/revise)

O

online

One word, not hyphenated

over vs. more than

Use "more than" for amounts

He has more than five flowers. [**NOT** He has over five flowers.]

More than 250 attended. [**NOT** Over 250 attended.]

P

parents weekend

No apostrophe; refers to "Parent and Family Weekend" event that is typically held once a year in the fall on each campus

part time / full time

Do not hyphenate when using as an adverb but hyphenate as an adjective before the noun:

She is a full-time tutor; His cousin teaches part time.

P.O. Box

Periods (with no spaces after) are preferred when abbreviating “Post Office”

peer institutions

A list of schools that St. John’s chooses to consider its “peers,” such as the Colleges That Change Lives (see full list at ctcl.org); also see *Annapolis Group*

percent, percentages

Always use numerals and spell out the word percent: a 4 percent increase; may use the percent sign “%” in tables, infographics, or when space is tight; try to be consistent

periods / spacing

In general, follow a period with a single space; see *initials*

phone / telephone numbers

Always use numerals separated by hyphens: 410-626-1234; do not use parenthesis, periods, or any other type of characters when listing a phone number; in general, a “1” is not required at the beginning of a long distance or toll-free number

platypus / axolotl / mascot

Although the college does not have an official mascot, it does have a few unofficial ones—the most prominent being the axolotl and the platypus

possessives

Consult *Chicago Manual* for additional information and see *apostrophes*; general guidelines:

Singular common nouns not ending in s

 Add ’s: the president’s speech

Singular common nouns ending in s

 Add only the apostrophe: the hostess’ menu

Plural common nouns not ending in s

 Add ’s: the children’s seminars

Plural common nouns ending in s

 Add only the apostrophe: the students’ books

Proper names not ending in s

Add 's: Mark's glasses

Proper (family) names ending in s

Add 's: Assistant Dean Maggie McGuinness's speech

preceptorials

These classes offer students the opportunity to follow the work of a particular author more deeply or to pursue a question of philosophy to another level; seminar is suspended so that students may choose preceptorials for seven weeks in junior and senior years; sometimes referred to as being similar to "electives" but some alumni and tutors reject this comparison

premier / premiere

Often confused: premiere is a debut performance; premier means ranked first or top of the line

president

Lowercase, except before a proper name

Santa Fe President Mark Roosevelt

Annapolis President Nora Demleitner

The college has two presidents, one on each campus

Mark Roosevelt, Santa Fe president

Program / program

Capitalized when referring to the distinctive academic curriculum at St. John's or used to refer to the Outdoor Program in Santa Fe; lowercase for all other references (even for "old program")

The Program is what makes St. John's such a unique college.

The Outdoor Program in Santa Fe offers students the opportunity to explore.

Have you heard about the Great Books Program at St. John's College?

The intramural program in Annapolis has a high participation rate.

Ptolemy Stone

Capitalized, two words; located on each campus, the Ptolemy Stone is an ancient device for measuring the angle of the sun compared to the earth, which is the basis for many navigational devices such as the sextant

Pulitzer Prize

Capitalized, typically two words and not hyphenated, unless forming a compound adjective: Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist

Has a Johnnie ever won the Pulitzer Prize?

Q

Q & A format

Use an ampersand

quad

Lowercase; refers to space outside back of McDowell Hall on the Annapolis campus

question period

This typically occurs after a lecture and is not the “question *and answer* period”

quotation marks

Periods and commas always appear inside quotation marks

Dashes, colons, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go within quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter; they go outside when they apply to the whole sentence

Avoid quotations that run over several paragraphs; if a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotation, do not place close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph:

“The tutor challenged us,” she said. “I didn’t think I understood the first chapter.

“But it all started to make sense as we discussed the book,” she added.

If a paragraph ends with a partial quotation or quoted phrase, and the next paragraph continues the quote, place close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph:

He said learning Greek was “the most difficult thing I’ve ever done.”

“But in the end,” he said, “it was also the most rewarding.”

If excerpting comments from a quotation, do not put ellipses at the beginning or end of the quotation; ellipses are only necessary when taking words within a sentence out of a quotation

It should also be noted that we typically use directional (also known as “smart” or “curly”) apostrophes and quotation marks. “Straight” ones should only be used in reference to measurement, e.g., feet and inches (4'6" and not 4’6”), or to degrees of longitude or latitude.

R

ratio

Always use figures separated by a hyphen: 8-1 student-faculty ratio

Reality (event)

Capitalized; a party held on each campus the weekend after the last full week of classes every year; Reality features skits, videos, dancing and a general party atmosphere; sports (such as Spartan Madball) are played

register

Lowercase when used as a noun to describe the book that is signed by new students at convocation

registrar

Use after the name to avoid awkward use of the word as a formal title

John Doe, registrar of the Santa Fe campus [**NOT** Registrar John Doe]

S

Saint / St.

Use “St.” for all references to St. John’s College [**NOT** Saint John’s College]

seasons

Names of seasons (fall, spring, winter, summer) are always lowercase; except when referring to a semester, typically only for admissions or referring to the academic year when clarity or emphasis is needed and then it’s acceptable to capitalize fall, spring, or summer and use year

semester

Capitalize fall, spring, or summer when used with a year to refer to an academic term

Will you be applying in Fall 2018 or Spring 2019?

seminar

Lowercase; often referred to as the heart of the academic program, seminar meets Mondays and Thursdays in the evenings; in seminar, Johnnies discuss interdisciplinary texts from across the curriculum—typically with two tutors and fewer than 21 students

semicolon (;)

Standard practices to increase ease of reading should be followed for semicolon usage, typically used to join two or more closely related ideas in a sentence (often referred to as a pause between thoughts)

Some people only read printed books; others read ebooks on tablets.

Semicolons are also used to set off items in a series that already contains commas, which might be confusing without the semicolon to clarify

She wanted bacon; eggs, over easy; and coffee for breakfast.

Semicolons can also separate long, complex phrases within the same sentence to clearly separate the ideas; however, it is typically better to make a very long sentence more readable by breaking it into shorter sentences

senior essay

Lowercase; the senior essay is the signature effort of a student's career at St. John's: The essay is not a work of specialized research, but the extended pursuit of a difficult question in dialogue with a great author

senior oral (oral examination)

Lowercase; each completed senior essay is assigned to a committee of three tutors, who examine the student on the essay in a one-hour, public conversation referred to as the senior oral; submission of a satisfactory senior essay and completion of the oral are conditions for receiving the degree

"Sicut cervus"

Work by Palestrina that students on both campuses have embraced as an unofficial anthem of St. John's

spacing (after a period)

In general, follow a period with a single space; see *initials*

spring / summer

See *seasons* or *semester*

spring break

Lowercase, two words

Spring Freshman Program (January Freshman Program)

Santa Fe students who matriculate in January as part of the Spring Freshman Program; students are called "January Freshmen" as part of the January Freshman (JF) program

startup

One word, not hyphenated

states

Preferred: In copy, always spell out the full names of the U.S. states

St. John's has campuses in New Mexico and Maryland.

Set off the state name with commas

He accepted a job in Bethesda, Maryland, after he graduated.

If the city is well known, the state name isn't necessary

She moved to Chicago.

Use the postal code abbreviation of states for mailing addresses (see *addresses* for more)

Exception for states: Alumni Notes uses AP Style for noting states with cities.

statewide

Do not hyphenate; also: campuswide, nationwide, worldwide, and collegewide

Steiner Lecture

Capitalize; lecture held yearly in Annapolis and made possible by a gift from the Steiner family in memory of Andrew Steiner (Class of 1963); the lecture series was established to bring notable speakers to campus from a variety of disciplines and endeavors, in recognition of Steiner's intellectual versatility, and for the sake of continued learning

suffixes after names

For suffixes (Jr., Sr., III, etc.), commas are not preceded (nor followed) by a comma unless specified by the individual or historical precedence

Martin Luther King Jr.

Cal Ripken Jr.

John Smith III

T**T-shirt**

Always capitalize "T" and use hyphen

telephone / phone numbers

Always use numerals separated by hyphens: 410-626-1234; do not use parenthesis, periods, or any other type of characters when listing a phone number; in general, a “1” is not required at the beginning of a long distance or toll-free number

temperature

Use numerals (except for “zero”) and spell out degrees

It was 20 degrees yesterday in Annapolis but they had 70-degree weather in Santa Fe.

The temperature read zero last week; with the wind chill, it was minus 2 degrees.

that, which

Follow traditional rules: “That” is used to introduce essential clauses and is never preceded by a comma; “which” is used to introduce nonessential clauses and is always preceded by a comma; see *who, whom*

theater

Lowercase; use this spelling unless proper name is Theatre

St. John’s partnered with the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC.

time of day, time ranges

Use numbers except for noon and midnight; lowercase a.m. and p.m.; use a colon to separate hours from minutes—do not include minutes if they are “00”

Ranges for times (and dates) may be signified with either *from ... to* or an en dash (–, shorter than an em dash but longer than a hyphen), but be consistent and do **not** mix the two forms; see more *dates and times*

The art gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The museum is open 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [**NOT** The museum is open from 10 a.m.–5 p.m.]

6 a.m. [**NOT** 6:00 AM]

6 to 10 a.m. [**NOT** 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.]

titles (as in position or job title)

Never capitalize a person’s job title in a sentence unless it is an official title and it precedes a proper name; the exception is when contact information is listed alone (not in a sentence) and then job titles should be capitalized

Dean Walter Sterling welcomed students to Santa Fe.

Walter Sterling, dean of the Santa Fe campus, welcomed the students.

Walter Sterling
Dean, Santa Fe
walter.sterling@sjc.edu

When referring to faculty, do not capitalize “tutor” before or after a name for the same reason we do not capitalize “student” before or after a name

titles (of publications and other things)

For more information and examples, consult *Chicago Manual*

Italicize and capitalize the titles of full-length works: books, magazines, journals, movies, musicals, newspapers, paintings, operas, plays, recordings, statues, and radio and TV shows

Also italicize the names of airplanes, boats, ships, etc.

Capitalize titles of courses, but not majors (unless a proper noun is included in the name)

Capitalize and place quotation marks around titles of: art exhibitions, lectures, magazine and newspaper articles, poems, speeches, songs, and episodes of radio and TV shows; see *quotation marks*

Lowercase articles (a, an, the), conjunctions of three letters or fewer (and, but, for, nor, or) and prepositions, unless they are the first word of the title

See *capitalization*

toward / towards

Preferred form is without the s

tutors / faculty

Faculty at St. John’s are called “tutors” because professors “profess,” but at St. John’s the faculty facilitate conversation in the classroom

When referring to faculty, do not capitalize “tutor” before or after a name for the same reason we do not capitalize “student” before or after a name

tutorials

At St. John’s, tutorials focus on three disciplines: mathematics, language, and music; all students take four years of mathematics, two years of ancient Greek, two years of French, and two years of music

U

Ultimate

Ultimate is capitalized and used to describe the non-contact team sport played with a flying disc (frisbee, which is a trademarked name)

unique

Means “without like or equal” so there is no degree of uniqueness

It is a unique home. [**NOT** It is a very unique home.]

URL

Never use “http,” “https,” nor “www” when listing a URL unless it is verified that the URL won’t work without them

The St. John’s College website should always be referenced as sjc.edu

(Note that the actual URL is <https://www.sjc.edu> but this should never appear that way online or in any published materials.)

U.S. / United States

Standard abbreviation of “U.S.” is acceptable in all references; always capitalized with periods; spelling out “United States” is also acceptable—especially when it used as a noun

U.S. Naval Academy (USNA or Navy)

Federal service academy and public liberal arts college in Annapolis; if using the acronym on subsequent reference, use U.S. Naval Academy (USNA); otherwise, Naval Academy (or Navy, in some contexts) is acceptable

V

vice president

Never capitalized, except before a proper name, and never hyphenated; avoid using “VP”

Phelosa Collaros is vice president of development and alumni relations in Santa Fe; the vice president in Annapolis, Kelly Brown, is also the capital campaign director.

voicemail

Lowercase, one word

W

web, webcam, webcast, webmaster, website

Lowercase

which, that

Follow traditional rules: “Which” is used to introduce nonessential clauses and is always preceded by a comma; “that” is used to introduce essential clauses and is never preceded by a comma; see *who*, *whom*

who, whom

Follow traditional rules: “Who” and “whom” are used for references to people; while “that” and “which” are used for inanimate objects and animals without names

Who is a subject: Who is handling homecoming this year?

Whom is an object: To whom should I address this concern?

Generally, a sentence will still make sense if you can answer “who” with either “he” or “she”

Who is handling homecoming? She is.

Generally, “whom” can be answered by “him” or “her”

To whom should I address this concern? To her.

Wi-Fi

Refers to wireless network for online access; also wifi

work-study

Always hyphenated

Y**year**

Include the year in a date when the event occurs in the past or there may be confusion about which year something is happening, and then set off the year with commas:

The meeting will be next fall on October 5, 2019, in the admissions office.

Spell out the month when using alone or with a year:

He arrives in October; McDowell Hall renovations will be completed in March 2018.

Follow rule for range of years: eliminate the initial repeated digits

2018–19 (connected by en dash)

Note: If three or more digits will change, use the entire number for both years: 1999–2003

It often looks better to use “to” (instead of an en dash) to connect numbers in a sentence but either are acceptable. See more: *date and time ranges*.

He attended the college from 1999 to 2003.

He attended the college 1999–2003.