

The Sage Colleges
Office of Communications
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SAGE STYLE GUIDE

Writing in Style

This Sage-specific style guide is intended to ensure consistency and clarity in publications, correspondence, and data of The Sage Colleges. Arranged alphabetically by subject and cross-referenced, this easy-to-use guide strives to answer many frequently asked questions.

For items not addressed in this guide, the Office of Communications defers to the most recent version available of the *Associated Press (AP) Stylebook and Libel Manual*. For matters of style that are particularly unique, troublesome, or create much debate, aim for consistency of use within the publication in question.

If you have comments, submit the suggested change(s) to the Communications Coordinator at communications@sage.edu. Submissions will be reviewed periodically. For a copy of the most recent version of the style guide, go to <http://www.sage.edu/current/branding/> under Standards Manual.

{TIP: When viewing this document electronically in Word, you can use the “Find” function under “Edit” to search for key words.}

Academic degrees

- Spell out when possible. *Ex: associate degree; bachelor’s degree; master’s degree; doctorate or doctoral degree.*
- Abbreviate specific degrees with periods and without spaces between the letters and periods. *Ex: B.A.; M.S.; Ph.D.; M.B.A.; J.D.; M.D.*
- Set off an abbreviated degree with commas after a full name. *Ex: John Smith, Ph.D., spoke.*
- In academic settings (meaning academic papers, not alumni pubs or general university or college press and media materials), *John Smith, Ph.D.*, is preferred for a holder of a doctoral degree. Reserve use of *Dr. John Smith* for a holder of a medical degree. Never combine the designations.

Accreditations

- The Sage Colleges is chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.
- Use the following for accreditations of individual programs:
 - Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE)
 - (of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA))

Commission On Accreditation for Dietetics Education
(of the American Dietetic Association (ADA))
Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
(of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA))
National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)
National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)

- The chemistry program offers a degree that is certified by the American Chemical Society (ACS).

Addresses

- Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., and St. only with a numbered address. *Ex: 1600 Broad St.* Spell out and capitalize a formal street name without a number. *Ex: His office is on Main Street.*
- Use lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name. *Ex: She stood at the corner of Congress and First streets.*
- When a state name is used in text in conjunction with a town, county, etc., abbreviate the state name (see States entry). *Ex: I went to school in State College, Pa., and now live in Clifton Park, N.Y.*
- When a state name is used as part of a mailing address, use the U.S. Postal Service abbreviation (always two uppercase letters with no periods). *Ex: Send applications to 2237 E. Main St., Amarillo, TX 79103.* (Also use the post office abbreviations in the alumni Class Notes to save space.)

Admission

- Always used in singular form at Sage. *Ex: Office of Admission, offices of admission, admission publications.*

Ages

- Always use numerical figures.

Alumnae/i

- Use *alumna* when referring to one female graduate, and *alumnus* for one male graduate.
- Use the plural forms: *alumni* when referring to male graduates; *alumnae* (pron. a-lum-nee) when referring to female graduates; and *alumnae/i* when referring to male and female graduates.

Ampersand/and

- Use the ampersand (&) for “and” only as part of an official corporate name. *Ex: Cowan & Lobel.*

Annual

- An event cannot be described as annual until it has been held in at least two successive years. Do not use the term “first annual.”

Apostrophe

- Do not use an apostrophe when referring to a decade as a single period of time. Do use an apostrophe if the decade is abbreviated. *Ex: She danced in the 1920s. Ellen attended college in the '50s.*

Buildings

- Use the following when referring to buildings on the Sage campuses:

Albany Campus:

Administration building
Albany Campus Library
Froman Hall
Graphic Design building
Gymnasium
Interior Design building
Rathbone Gallery (in Rathbone Hall until December 2002)
Sage Graduate School at University Heights
Science building
Visual Arts Center (*formerly the Fine Arts Building*)
West Hall
William F. and Mary C. Kahl Campus Center (*or Kahl Campus Center*)

Troy Campus:

Ackerman Hall
Admission House (*or Admission*)
Alan Goldberg Auditorium (*or Goldberg Auditorium*) in Bush Memorial Center
Allies Center for the Study of Difference and Conflict
Anna M. Plum Memorial Building (*or Plum Building*)
Buchman Pavilion and Sage Hall Campus Center
Bush Memorial Center (*see Julia Howard Bush Memorial Center*)
Cowie Hall
Frear House
French House
Fredericka Voorhaar Slingerland Alumnae House (*or Alumnae House*)
Gale House (*McMurray/Spicer/Gale is acceptable when talking about campus residential houses*)
German House
Gurley Hall
Hart Hall
Helen M. Upton Center for Women's Studies (*or Upton Center*)
James L. Meader Little Theater (*or Meader Little Theater*)
James Wheelock Clark Library
Jane Haight Wells Spirituality Center
John Paine Building
Julia Howard Bush Memorial Center (*or Bush Memorial Center*)
Kellas Hall and Slocum Hall (*Kellas/Slocum is acceptable when talking about campus residence halls*)
Lorraine Walker Center
Lorraine Walker Education Building

Manning Hall
McCrea House
McKinstry Hall/McKinstry Dining Hall
McMurray House (*McMurray/Spicer/Gale is acceptable when talking about campus residential houses*)
Meyer Gym
m.o.s.s. books and other provisions
Ricketts Hall
Robison Athletic and Recreation Center
Robison Common
Sage Hall
Schacht Fine Arts Center
Science Hall
Smyth Terrace of Buchman Pavilion
Spanish House
Slocum Hall (*see Kellas Hall*)
Spicer House (*McMurray/Spicer/Gale is acceptable when talking about campus residential houses*)
Vail House
Vanderheyden Hall

Campus

- Capitalize *Troy Campus* and *Albany Campus*. In a second or generic reference when not used in combination with Troy or Albany, campus should not be capitalized.

Capitalization

- Use uppercase for the proper names of Sage offices and academic divisions, departments, or programs, but lowercase for the common title. *Ex: Education division, Physical Therapy department.*
- Use uppercase to specify programs. *Ex: Sage's Education program.* Use lowercase when non-specific. *Ex: Sage's programs in education and psychology.*
- Use lowercase for seasons of the year, except when referring to Sage's academic semesters. *Ex: The program was held in the spring. The Fall semester begins in September.*
- Use lowercase for first-year students (do **not** use the term 'freshman'), sophomores, juniors, or seniors when referring to individuals, but DO capitalize names of organized entities. *Ex: Class of 1920, the Senior Class.*
- Use lowercase for majors and degrees, including graduate degree programs. *Ex: Sue is a business major. She is earning a master's degree in business administration.*
- Capitalize names of honorary degrees. *Ex: Sally Smith received a Doctor of Education from Sage.*
- Capitalize *Board of Trustees* on first mention when referring to Sage's board. Capitalize *the Board* but not *the trustees* when listed alone thereafter.

- Capitalize specific course titles only; do not use quotation marks. *Ex: Contemporary History of Russia; a course in biology.*
- Use lowercase for an academic subject when it is used as a general field of study. *Ex: Russell Sage College offers programs in the health sciences.* Use uppercase when referring to a formal academic: *Ex: John Smith is a professor of Biology at Russell Sage College.*
- Use uppercase for a person's specific, official title, ONLY if it precedes their name. *Ex: The seminar was led by Vice President for Academic Affairs Judy Smith. John Smith, associate professor of Biology, attended the seminar.* Do **not** capitalize titles that follow a name: *Ex: The report was reviewed by Jeanne Neff, president of The Sage Colleges. vice president Judy Smith. John Smith, professor of Biology, is teaching the course.*
- Always capitalize languages. *Ex: I am taking a course in English. He is a professor of Spanish.*
- Capitalize official program names on campus, such as the *Higher Education Opportunity Program* (HEOP is acceptable on second reference).
- Capitalize names of races and nationalities, such as *Spanish, Caucasian, Irish*, etc.
- Capitalize only the first word of a phrase in tabular listings of events, unless using a proper noun or an official title. *Ex: 8:30 a.m. – Registration and welcoming remarks
9:30 a.m. – Representative speaks from Education for the Gifted*
- Capitalize regions of the country, but do not capitalize compass directions. *Ex: We live in the Northeast. Saratoga is north of Albany.*
- Use lowercase for government, city, county, state, and federal, unless part of a proper title. *Ex: We live in New York state. We work in the City of Troy. We partner with the city schools of Troy.*
- Articles, coordinate conjunctions, and prepositions (a, and, at, the, on, in, to, under, between, etc.) should not be capitalized in headings (headlines, titles) unless they appear as the first word in the title.
- Capitalize the word reunion when it is used to refer to the annual Russell Sage Reunion. Do not capitalize it when it is used in a common reference. *Ex: Fifty alumnae from the Class of 1966 attended Reunion this year. Several alumnae talked about their reunion with other classmates last month.*

Chair

- Use *chair*, rather than *chairman, chairwoman, or chairperson*. Do not capitalize in text, only as part of the signature of a letter or other formal document.

Class years

- When identifying current students or alumnae by their class years, use the following guidelines:

Jane D. Smith, RSC '71, serves as president of the group. (in mixed-audience publications)

Jane D. Smith '71 serves as president of the group. (in RSC-only publications)

*Jane D. Smith is a member of the Russell Sage College, Class of 1971 OR
Jane D. Smith is a 1971 graduate of Russell Sage College.*

Commas

- If an individual's age is used, set it off by commas. *Ex: John Smith, 48, is president of the club.*
- Use a comma to separate parts of a compound sentence, placing the comma before the conjunction. Do not use a comma with an essential, or restrictive, clause (usually introduced by *that*). Use a comma to set off a nonessential, or nonrestrictive, clause (introduced by *which*).
- Use a final (serial) comma before the conjunction (and/or) in a simple series of **three or more** items. *Ex: The flag is red, white, and blue.* If items within the series require conjunctions, you will still use a final serial comma. *Ex: I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.* Also use a serial comma before the final conjunction in a complex series of phrases. *Ex: Consider whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*
- Do not set off the titles Jr., Sr., II, III, with commas. *Ex: John Smith Jr. will visit campus next week.*
- Use a comma after introductory words such as "in fact" or "therefore."

Composition titles

- Place in italics the names of books, newspapers, journals, films, full-length plays, symphonies, operas, ships, and airplanes.
- Use quotation marks around articles, poems, songs, one-act plays, television programs, and sculptures.

Computer Terms

- CD-ROM
- database
- download
- E-mail or e-mail
- home page
- web site
- the Internet
- online (no dash) or off-line (with dash)
- PC for personal computer system (Macintosh, IBM or IBM-compatible, UNIX, etc.)
- World Wide Web, or Web, *not* WWW

Dates

- When writing a date, place a comma between the day and year, and after the year. *Ex: On July 4, 1976, the nation celebrated its 200th birthday.*
- No comma is needed between the month and year when the day is not mentioned. *Ex: Julie and Doug were married in July 1995.*
- For days of the month, omit "rd," "th," "st," "nd." *Ex: The event is scheduled for April 6.*

- Use the *Fourth of July* spelled out, *July Fourth*, or *Independence Day*, but not *July 4th*.

Decades

- Do not use an apostrophe to form the plural when referring to a decade as a single period of time, but DO use an apostrophe if the decade is abbreviated. *Ex: Jane attended college in the 1920s. Jane attended college in the '20s.*

Emeritae/i

- Use *emerita* when referring to one female retired professor or trustee, and *emeritus* for one male retired professor or trustee.
- Use the plural forms: *emeriti* when referring to males; *emeritae* (pron. e-meri-tee) when referring to females; and *emeritae/i* when referring to males and females.

Freshman/First-year

- Do not use the terms freshman or freshmen at Sage; always use *first-year student(s)*.

Gallery

- *Rathbone Gallery* is acceptable by itself, or can be listed as *Rathbone Gallery at Sage College of Albany*.

Hyphens

- Hyphenate adjectival phrases (an adjective and a noun) when they precede the noun modified.
Ex: She has a 4-year-old son. John is 7 years old.
He is a freelance writer.
The letter came first-class mail.
She lived in on-campus housing. The two rented an apartment off campus.
- Hyphenate part time and full time only when used as adjectives. *Ex: She is a part-time instructor in the English department. He works full time in the Biology department.*
- Do not hyphenate vice president (or any other compound titles) in any reference. *Ex: She is the vice president of the organization.*
- Hyphenate *great-grandfather*, *great-great-grandmother*, etc. Use *great grandfather* only if the intended meaning is that the grandfather was a great man; avoid that confusing construction if possible.

Libraries

- In Albany: Albany Campus Library.
- In Troy: James Wheelock Clark Library.

Lists

- When noting an indented list of items, do not punctuate the end of each line item nor the last item. *Ex: Sage offers several admission options:*

full-time study
part-time study
evening study
graduate study

Lowercase/uppercase

- Both are one word, not two.

Middle initials

- Do not use unless necessary to distinguish between two people of the same name (or unless specifically requested for use on official documents).
- When using a middle initial, always follow the letter with a period. *Ex: John W. Smith.*

Money

- Do not use decimal points when referring to round figures. *Ex: \$6, not \$6.00.*
- Use figures for one million or more, but spell out the word. *Ex: This is a \$15 million capital campaign.*

More than/over

- When referring to something that can be counted, use *more than* rather than *over*. The word *over* generally refers to spatial relationships. *Ex: More than 50 people attended. Jason is over six feet tall.*

Numbers/numerals

- Spell out from one to nine; use numerals for 10 and above. *Ex: She owns two dogs and 10 cats.*
- Use numerals even for numbers below 10, when indicating: age, course credit hours, statistics, ratios, percentages, and amounts of money.
- Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence, unless that number indicates a calendar year (but avoid if possible). *Ex: The year 1976 was a very good one. 1976 was a good year.*
- Use a comma after digits signifying thousands except when referring to temperature, year, or SAT scores. *Ex: We served more than 4,000 students.*
- Use figures for one million or more, but spell out the word. *Ex: This is a \$15 million capital campaign.*

Percent

- Spell out *percent* in text, and always use numerals. *Ex: Our retention rate is 85 percent.*

Preferred spellings and terms

- advisor, not adviser
- aesthetics, not asthetics
- alumna or alumnus, not alum; alumnae or alumni, not alums (*see separate entry for more*)
- catalog, not catalogue
- coeducational, not co-educational
- ensure, not insure (except for insurance)
- health care (two words)
- *See separate entries for the proper spelling of building names and the usage of terms such as "more than/over" etc.*

Quotation marks

- The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.
- The dash, semicolon and colon, question mark, and exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence. *Ex: Did you watch “The Story of English”? Then he asked, “Did you check for iron in the sample?”*

Russell Sage College

- Russell Sage College is a college for women, but *for women* is not part of its official title. If used as a descriptor in text, do not capitalize or italicize *for women*. If the phrase is included in a display title format, italicize *for Women*. *Ex: Russell Sage College for Women*
- Capitalize references to big or little sisters at Sage. *Ex: Jane Smith was my Big Sister.*
- Capitalize Golden Horseshoes, Blue Angels, Red Devils, Purple Cows.
- To show connection to the Sage institution, add the phrase, “A member of The Sage Colleges” after the individual college’s name on first reference. *Ex: The event will be held at Russell Sage College, a member of The Sage Colleges.*
- The abbreviation “RSC” is acceptable on second reference in non-formal documents.

Sage College of Albany

- The name “Sage College of Albany” is not preceded by the word “the”.
- Approved by the New York State Board of Regents in December 2001, and formally adopted immediately, it subsumes Sage Junior College of Albany and Sage Evening College.
- NOTE: On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to use the phrase, “formerly Sage Junior College of Albany and Sage Evening College,” but avoid if possible.
- To show connection to the Sage institution, add the phrase, “A member of The Sage Colleges” after the individual College’s name on first reference. *Ex: The event will be held at Sage College of Albany, a member of The Sage Colleges.*
- The abbreviation “SCA” is acceptable for second reference in **non-formal documents**. When corresponding with alumni, SJCA and SEC will continue to be acceptable on second reference.

Sage Graduate School

- The name is not preceded by “the”.
- To show connection to the Sage institution, add the phrase, “A member of The Sage Colleges” after the individual College name on first reference. *Ex: The event will be held at Sage Graduate School, a member of The Sage Colleges.*
- The abbreviation “SGS” is acceptable for second reference in **non-formal documents**.

The Sage Colleges

- Use *45 Ferry St., Troy, NY 12180* for all Troy office mailing addresses.
- For Albany offices, use *140 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208*.
- The Sage Colleges identifies the comprehensive institution comprising: Russell Sage College, Sage Graduate School, Sage College of Albany, and Sage After Work.
- On first reference, use the full name of The Sage Colleges. On subsequent references, use the Colleges, Sage, the Sage community, or the institution.
- The Sage Colleges refers to one overarching institution, and is therefore a single entity. *Ex: The Sage Colleges is highly respected in the community. The Sage Colleges is an equal opportunity employer.*
- To show connection of any one of the three units to the whole Sage institution, add the phrase, "A member of The Sage Colleges" after the individual unit name on first reference. *Ex: The event will be held at the Sage College of Albany, a member of The Sage Colleges.*
- Capitalize (as proper names) specific features of the curriculum and student affairs of each of The Sage Colleges. *Ex: Founder's Day Convocation, Rally Day, Portfolio Day, etc.*

Salutations/Addresses

- When addressing a letter, use *Mr. or Dr., Hon., etc.*, as appropriate for men. Use *Ms.* as the default for women, unless *Dr. or Hon., etc.*, is appropriate. Use *Mrs.* only if addressee has requested this designation.
- When writing to a couple with different last names, separate their names and include each in its entirety. *Ex: Dr. Jane Smith and Dr. John Jones.*

Spacing

- Do not use double spaces between sentences or after colons. Single space only between sentences.

States

- Spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone in textual material. When conveying a mailing address, use U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for states.
- In all other cases in text, use the following Associated Press abbreviations in conjunction with the name of a city, county, town, village or military base:

Ala.	Kan.	Nev.	S.C.
Ariz.	Ky.	N.H.	S.D.
Ark.	La.	N.J.	Tenn.
Calif.	Md.	N.M.	Vt.
Colo.	Mass.	N.Y.	Va.
Conn.	Mich.	N.C.	Wash.
Del.	Minn.	N.D.	W.Va.
Fla.	Miss.	Okla.	Wis.
Ga.	Mo.	Ore.	Wyo.
Ill.	Mont.	Pa.	
Ind.	Neb.	R.I.	

- The names of eight states are never abbreviated: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah (except for postal codes in mailing addresses).
- Within text, place one comma between the city and the state name, unless ending a sentence. *Ex: He was traveling from Nashville, Tenn, to Austin, Texas.*
- The following U.S. cities can stand alone in text (no state needed):

Atlanta	Houston	Philadelphia
Baltimore	Indianapolis	Phoenix
Boston	Las Vegas	Pittsburg
Chicago	Los Angeles	St. Louis
Cincinnati	Miami	Salt Lake City
Cleveland	Milwaukee	San Antonio
Dallas	Minneapolis	San Diego
Denver	New Orleans	San Francisco
Detroit	New York	Seattle
Honolulu	Oklahoma City	Washington

- Publications to alumni do not need to use states with the cities of Troy and Albany. *Ex: Jody Smith '79 now works at Samaritan Hospital in Troy.*
- Use *New York state* when necessary to distinguish the state from New York City.
- Use *state of Washington or Washington state* to distinguish from Washington, D.C.

Telephone numbers

- Telephone area codes are set off by parentheses unless it is an 800 number or the number is already in parentheses. Then use a dash after the area code. *Ex: (518) 244-2000. 1-800-123-4567. (The correct telephone number is 518-244-2000.)*
- Extension numbers, if used, are preceded by *Ext.*

That/which/who

- *That* is preferred to introduce clauses that refer to inanimate objects or animals without names. *Which* is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a nonessential, or nonrestrictive, clause (one that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence) that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. *Who* introduces clauses that refer to human beings or animals with names.

Theater/re

- Refer to *theatre* program or the *theatre* profession using –re. Refer to physical facilities using –er. *Ex: the James L. Meader Little Theater.* Exceptions include official names that use the re spelling. *Ex: The New York State Theatre Institute.*

Time

- Morning and afternoon designations are in lowercase letters with periods, with no spaces between them. *Ex: 8 a.m., 2 p.m.*
- Use 7 p.m., not 7:00 p.m., for the hour; 7:15 p.m. for time not on the hour.
- Do not use 12 p.m. or 12 a.m.; use noon and midnight without a 12 in front of them.

Titles (see also Composition titles)

- Capitalize titles when they appear before a name. Do not capitalize them if they follow a name. *Ex: Sage President Jane Smith or Jane Smith, president of The Sage Colleges. The course is taught by Professor John Smith. Janet Smith, assistant professor of English, attended.*
- On first reference, refer to individuals using their full names (plus Dr. if they hold a medical degree); thereafter, use **only** the last name, not Ms., Mr., or Mrs., etc. *Ex: Dr. Jane Smith gave the keynote speech. Smith graduated in 1970.*
- In the case of two subjects with the same last name in one article, use full names on all references.
- Do not capitalize unofficial titles preceding a name. *Ex: The exhibit featured artist John Smith.*
- Do not capitalize titles used without the name (but do capitalize formal names of offices or academic departments). *Ex: For information, call the director of Communications. A professor of History will be in attendance. The only acceptable exception is the President of the United States.*

United States/U.S.

- Spell out when used as a noun; abbreviate when used as an adjective. *Ex: They spent years adjusting to the United States. U.S. policy in Europe was the topic of discussion.*

Women's Center

- The proper title is the *Helen M. Upton Center for Women's Studies*.

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S. B. Gorman