

Western Front Style Guide

THE WESTERN FRONT STYLE GUIDE

Updated July 2016

Most of the entries in this style guide come from the AP Stylebook, “When Words Collide,” Byson’s Dictionary of Troublesome Words, the Resource and Outreach Programs inclusive language guide, “On Writing Well,” www.usu.edu (Links to an external site.) and input from Western Front staff.

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STORY FORMAT: Put at the top of all articles for The Western Front:

SLUG (a couple of all-caps words to name the story_

Your name, phone number, email address

SECTION (news, features, sports, etc.)

Intended issue date

Word count: ____

Source names (CQ) and contact info

THEN BEGIN THE STORY:

By Mary Jones

Your story starts here...

STYLE GUIDE, A-Z

(* Denotes styles specifically or commonly used in The Western Front)

abbreviations – Avoid alphabet soup; do not use abbreviations or acronyms the reader would not quickly recognize on second reference. If you’re not sure about something, check it in this style guide or the AP Stylebook.

Avoid awkward constructions; do not follow an organization’s full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear without this construction, don’t use it.

The Viking Union — people recognize VU on second reference. Same with Associated Students/AS.

Tutoring Center is “the center” on second reference, etc.

--Street abbreviations: Avoid awkward constructions; Remember to spell out street, avenue, etc. when there’s no specific address, as in “the house on Main Street.” But abbreviate ONLY avenue, boulevard and street – don’t abbreviate highway, road, etc. Correct: “the house at 123 Main St.” or “the house at 123 Jones Road” or “the house at 123 Mount Baker Highway.”

***ability** — Most times, you need not refer to someone’s disability, but when the need arises, make sure you ask the person you are talking with or referring to how they prefer to identify: for example, some people prefer “blind,” while other people prefer “visually impaired.” Use language that focuses on the person, not the disability. Always put the person before

the disability: *person with a disability*, not *disabled person*. *People with schizophrenia*, not *schizophrenics*.

Use language that conveys a positive message and emphasizes abilities rather than limitations. Avoid negative or value-laden terms that overextend the severity of the disability. *Barbara uses a wheelchair for mobility*, not *Barbara is confined to a wheelchair*.

Use: As a person living with a physical disability, Lin appreciates the assistance of her guide dog.

Do not use: Lin, who is physically disabled, could not get by without the help of her guide dog.

Do not use a disability to label people. Often, people with a similar disability may each experience this disability very differently. Avoid outdated and derogatory terms such as “the disabled,” “handicapped,” “crazy,” “crippled” or “physically challenged.”

Remember that many disabilities (such as ADHD) are invisible; do not assume that someone is not living with a disability just because you cannot tell by looking at the person.

academic degrees – The preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation, such as BA or Dr., and instead use a phrase such as: *John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology*. See also: the entry for doctor.

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

Academic Instructional Center, Academic Instructional Center West – Second reference for Academic Instructional Center West is Academic West. (No shortened second reference for Academic Instructional Center.)

***academic year** – Use for fall through spring quarters, such as “the student finished the academic year of 2014-15 with a 3.5 GPA.”

***according to** – Use when attributing to documents, not people. For The Western Front, we always use “said” for people and “according to” for documents because it keeps things easier for reporters. Advanced reporters may break this rule occasionally. Remember: You have to know the rule before you can break the rule.

adviser – Not *advisor*. For example: *Lifestyle Adviser program, faculty adviser, peer adviser, resident adviser...*

affect, effect – *Affect* as a verb, means to influence. *The game will affect the standings*. *Affect*, as a noun, is not needed in everyday language.

Effect, as a noun, means result. *The effect was overwhelming*. *Effect* is ONLY a verb when it is in a phrase like *to effect change* (meaning to create change). You shouldn't really ever need to use *effect* as a verb.

ages – Always use figures for people or animals. *The girl was 15 years old*. Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as a substitute for a noun: *a 5-year-old boy*.

All right vs. alright – Always use all right (two words). Hyphenate only when used as compound modifier, as in “He is an all-right guy.”

alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae – Use *alumnus* when referring to a man and *alumni* for a group of men, or a mixed group. Use *alumna* for a woman and *alumnae* for a group of women.

among, between – *Between* introduces two items, *among* introduces more than two.

a.m., p.m. – Lowercase with period, avoid the redundant *7 p.m. tonight*. Only use the minute side when using a specific time not on the hour. *7:30 a.m., 8:43 p.m.* (but never *9:00 p.m.*)

apart, a part – They mean opposite things. *Apart* means separate, not together. *A part* implies togetherness: something is a part of something else.

***Associated Students** – Singular (it’s an organization). Do not drop the s when combining with other words: *Associated Students Productions*. **AS** is an appropriate second reference. *Associated Students President Mary Smith*.

AS Outdoor Center - AS acronym is OK with first reference for the AS Outdoor Center. Outdoor Center on second reference.

AS Productions - All references

The Atrium – The shops/eating places in Artzen Hall. Capitalize “The.”

***Bellingham Farmers Market** – Note: not a possessive, so no apostrophe. Located at the Depot Market Square.

Bible – Capitalize when you mean the black book in American hotel rooms everywhere. Lowercase when you use the term as slang for an authoritative source. *Example: Elements of Style is my bible.*

bitcoin – As a concept, Bitcoin is capitalized, but the currency unit, bitcoin, is lowercase.

Blackboard – Capitalize when referring to Western’s former online learning system. (Western now uses Canvas.)

Bloedel Donovan Park – Note spelling and lack of hyphen of local park on Lake Whatcom.

book titles, album titles, movie titles, magazines – See *titles* in AP Stylebook

boy – Acceptable for males younger than 18. Use *man* or *young man* for those 18 and older.

British Columbia – Spell out on first reference

burglary, larceny, robbery, theft – There is a difference between a burglar and a robber, and you have to know it.

1. Larceny: If I leave my Sublime CDs on the floor outside my office door and you take them without breaking into my office and without threatening me, then you have committed larceny, also known as simple theft, and you are a thief.
2. Burglary: If you break into my office (or even pass through the unlocked door without my permission) and take the Sublime CDs off my desk, but did not threaten me, you are a burglar.

3. Robbery: If you see me carrying my Sublime CDs and are overcome by an uncontrollable urge to possess them, and you demand them from me and make a real or implied threat, you are a robber.
4. Sometimes you see the phrase "aggravated robbery" in newspapers. The term means that the robber not only made a threat but also displayed a weapon, such as a gun or knife. This person is still called a robber. Just say, *The robbery suspect carried a knife, police said.*

business names – Get them right. When in doubt, call the business owner, check the City of Bellingham’s business license registry, look on the business’ sign, look on the business’ webpage, maybe search old news stories. Don’t trust phone books or your memory. Keep an eye on capitalization, spelling, symbols, possessives and spaces: *Boundary Bay Brewery & Bistro, Stuart’s at the Market, Mallard Ice Cream, the 3B Tavern, The Bagelry*

Canvas – Western’s online learning system.

Carver Gym – Use Sam Carver Gymnasium on first reference, Carver Gym on later references.

cellphone – one word. Also, *smartphone*.

CD – Both the AP Stylebook and the Western Front allow *CD* (instead of the full “compact disc”) to be used on any reference.

children – Avoid using “kids” when referring to people; only use it for goats. “Kids” may be fine occasionally for a feature, but it is a matter of taste/tone/voice. Typically, avoid using “kids,” though.

church – Remember that each church has its own lexicon, and if you screw it up you make enemies. As with all titles, make sure you check the exact spelling and phrasing of titles before turning your story in.

City Council – Capitalize when referring to a specific City Council, even if the name of the town is not given. *Bellingham Mayor Doug Thompson will ask the City Council to spend more on patrolling near Western.* Do not capitalize when referring to a city council in general: *A city council typically has eight members.*

class standing – Always lowercase, usually goes in front of name. Example: freshman Britney Spears (NOT: Britney Spears, freshman). Only add “Western” if needed in context, such as “Western freshman Britney Spears and Whatcom Community College senior Joe Smith walked through campus.”

Paul Cocke – Paul Cocke is Western’s director of communications and marketing. Front style does not refer to him as “university spokesperson.”

colorblind – one word

Communications Facility – Note the building name on campus is plural, Communications Facility, but the department is singular, communication department. Also, it’s Communications Facility lawn (lowercase lawn).

Compass 2 Campus – The Western program that works with young students to put them on track to go to college. Note the “2” in the official name, not “to.”

consumers — Avoid this word; it implies people exist to consume. People are people. If they're shopping, they're customers or shoppers. In other cases, employ similar judgment: Use what they're doing as a guide for what to call them. Otherwise, it's always safe to call people "people."

***councilmember** — The Western Front breaks from AP on this.
Not *councilman* or *councilwoman*; always *council*, *councilor*, *councilmember*.

***CQ** — Latin for “cedit quaestio,” meaning “the question falls.” Signifies that an unusual-looking spelling or word usage has been double-checked. Add CQ in brackets in a story draft to signify that you’ve double-checked the spelling. Example: “John Rumpelstiltskin [CQ] was injured...”

Editors MUST remove the [CQ] before publication.

currently — Avoid use, unless it helps the article make sense because of references to the past, present and future tenses.

dash (—) — Use em dashes (the longer ones), not en dashes. On a Mac, hold down Shift + option + hyphen. On a PC, type two hyphens and press space inside of the following word. **Remember** to put a space between each word on either side of the dash.

dates — Abbreviate months with specific dates. Don’t abbreviate March through July.
Example: Jan. 10 or March 10.
Spell out months when not used with a specific date
Example: During November or August 2014...

days/dates — Use days AND dates in print stories for all days (including current week), such as “The speech occurred on Thursday, Sept. 26.” This rule is an exception to the AP Stylebook, which permits days-only references to same-week time references.
--Never use “yesterday” or “tomorrow.” For day of publication, use the day and date, not “today.” For online, always use dates.
--Days of week are never abbreviated.

dead week, finals week — lowercase.

department — Use lowercase when identifying college departments, such as journalism department.

directions and regions — Capitalize words such as North and South if they refer to places: *He is from the South.* Lower case when referring to compass directions, such as “*I am walking north.*”

disability — See **ability**.

Doctor -- Use *Dr.* in first reference as a formal title before a name for a person who holds a doctor of medicine (or dental surgery, osteopathy or podiatric medicine, etc.): *Dr. Jonas Salk.* In general, do not use *Dr.* before the name of people who hold other doctoral degrees, such as a doctorate in philosophy, because most readers associate *Dr.* only with physicians. Instead, use a phrase such as: *John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology.*

dorm — The preferred term is *residence hall.* *Dormitory* sounds antiquated. Use *dorm* only in quotes.

dorm names – The Ridge: Ridgeway Beta, Ridgeway Gamma, Ridgeway Kappa, Ridgeway SHADO.

Ridgeway SHADO includes Ridgeway Sigma, Ridgeway Highland, Ridgeway Alpha, Ridgeway Delta, Ridgeway Omega.

--North campus dorms include: Mathes Hall, Edens Hall, Edens Hall North, Higginson Hall, Nash Hall.

--South campus dorms include: Birnam Wood, Fairhaven Complex, Buchanan Towers, Buchanan Towers East.

downtown – Never capitalize. And don't write "downtown Fairhaven." Downtown and Fairhaven are separate locations.

DVD – Stands for *digital video disc*. The abbreviation is acceptable in all references.

elderly, senior citizen – Use these words carefully and sparingly. See entries in AP.

email – Short for *electronic mail*; note the lowercase "e" and the absence of a hyphen.

entitled – Use it to mean a right to do or have something: *She was entitled to the promotion*. Do not use it to mean **titled**: *The book was titled "On Writing Well."*

environmental titles – Avoid environmental jargon (*green, sustainability* and other jargon words). Use specifics and explain. Use numbers and specifics to explain how something is environmentally friendly or "green." For example: Instead of saying "*green building*" explain that the building uses __ percent less energy...

eras – Use, for example, 1980s or '80s.

everyday (adj.) – Describes things that happen every day, or things that are commonplace (e.g. *the everyday grind; an everyday occurrence*).

every day – Daily, each day (e.g. *I eat a huge plate of spaghetti every day; he goes to the gym every day to maintain his physique; the farmers water their crops every day at dawn; Fred Meyer is open every day from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.*)

Faculty Senate

FAFSA – Acceptable second reference for Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

family names – For multiple sources who have the same last name (usually because they are related), use first and last names on second reference. (Exception: It's OK to use first-name only for children with same last name.) Later in the story, if the focus has shifted to one family member, return to standard practice of using only the last name.

farther, further – *Farther* refers to physical distance: *He walked farther into the woods*. *Further* refers to an extension of time or degree: *She will look further into the mystery*

finals week, dead week – Lowercase.

Fine Arts Building – Note "building" is capitalized since it is part of the official name.

***font** – Refers to the style of typeface. The Western Front uses 11-point Georgia on pages.

Fraser Hall – Note spelling of Fraser.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid – Second reference: FAFSA

the Front – The official name of Western’s campus newspaper. Note that “the” is in the official title, The Western Front, and capitalized. On second reference, the Front is acceptable (lowercase “the”).

full time, full-time – Hyphenate only when used as a compound modifier: *He works full time. She has a full-time job.* Same for *part time* and *part-time*.

***gay** – Always ask sources how they identify. Use the term “sexual orientation,” not “sexual preference” and not “lifestyle choice.” Refer to a person’s sexual orientation only if it is relevant to the story.

See the inclusive language guide and the Western Front Style Guide entry on **sexual orientation**. The NLGJA and GLAAD have good style guides as well.

***gender** – Preferred over “sex” unless referring to biological sex, in which case you could use terms such as “female-bodied” when appropriate. Gender is a continuum, not a binary. Always use the pronoun of a person’s choosing.

- Use gender-neutral terms and phrasing. This can often be achieved with simple rewording of sentences. Examples: *Whoever is promoted will get a raise*, not *Whoever gets the promotion will have his or her pay increased*. *Employees should read their packets carefully*, not *Each employee should read his packet carefully*.
- Avoid terms that show gender biases in the profession, such as *cleaning lady*, *policeman*, *firemen*, *chairman*. Use *cleaner*, *police officer*, *firefighters*, *chair*. Also: *nurse*, *lawyer*, *doctor*, not *male nurse*, *woman lawyer*, *female doctor*.
- Use parallel terms or terms of equal status. Avoid terms that connote gender inferiority.
- *Trans*, *transgender* and *transsexual* refer to gender identities, not sexual orientations. Always use a transgender person’s chosen name (Refer to GLAAD Media Guide). Western’s directory may have a student listed as a certain name, but does not mean they go by it.
- When asking for gender pronouns, do not use the word ‘preferred.’ It insinuates A) they are not the gender they chose, B) and that we might not publish it the way they want
- Gender pronouns: Use pronouns the source identifies as. ***always ask if unsure or they do not make clear when they speak, and/or if the story requires. Ex: covering gender neutral bathrooms***
 - **-They** is a singular pronoun, and is often asked to be used for gender non-conforming/ non-binary individuals.

General University Requirements – Second reference: GUR; GURs for plural.

girl – Applicable until the 18th birthday is reached. Use *woman* or *young woman* afterward. Especially avoid pairing *men* and *girls* when referring to adults of both sexes. Be alert to sports team references on this. High schools have girls soccer teams; colleges have women’s soccer teams.

governmental bodies – Read this AP Stylebook entry carefully to determine when to capitalize names of agencies and departments.

green coats – Lowercase these Public Safety Assistants who escort students across campus at night.

hangover – One word. But **hung over** = two words.

Harrington Field – Use full name on first reference: Robert S. Harrington Field.

home page – Two words.

Humanities Building – Note “building” is capitalized because it is part of the official name.

Huxley College of the Environment – On second reference, just use Huxley.

include – Use *include* to introduce a series when the items that follow are only part of the total: *The zoo includes lions and tigers.*

Indians – Always ask sources how they identify. Where possible, be precise and use the name of the tribe, as opposed to a general term. Typically, an Indian is somebody from India. *American Indian* is a term for those in the United States. *Native American* is acceptable in quotations and names of organizations. AP Style says both American Indian and Native American are acceptable, but it also urges reporters to follow the person’s preference.

individuals – Avoid use of this term when referring to multiple people. Instead, use *people*.

Internet, Web – Both are uppercase. When writing Internet addresses, follow the spelling and capitalization of the website owner, as in this example: *eBay.com*. Often this can be found in the copyright at the bottom of the page.

is something that – Wordy and passive. Can almost always be simplified and/or phrased in a more active way. Example: *Music is something that everyone can enjoy* should be written: *Everyone can enjoy music.*

it's, its – “It’s” is a contraction that means *it is* or *it has*. “Its” is possessive and means “belonging to it.”

***-ize words** – The “-ization” of words has reached epidemic proportions. Writers interested in the clarity, precision and beauty of language need to take precautions. Tacking *-ize* onto nouns often creates useless, awkward words. There is no special excuse for *moisturize* when we already have *moisten*, or for *finalize* when we have *finish*. The general principle should be that the word should not draw undue attention to itself by its novelty or air of contrivance.

jargon – The special vocabulary and idioms of a particular group. It’s the practice of never calling a spade a spade when you might instead call it a manual earth-restructuring implement. In general, avoid jargon. Write in simple, clear language. When it is appropriate in a special context, include an explanation.

last – Avoid the use of last as a synonym for latest if it might imply finality. Last should not be used when it might be misinterpreted, as in *the last episode of the television series* when you mean the most recent but not the final one. Past-tense verbs usually suffice in sentences such as: *It happened Wednesday. It happened in April.*

lay, lie – The action word is *lay*: *I will lay the book on the table*. It takes a direct object. *Laid* is the form for its past tense and its past participle. Its present participle is *laying*.

Lie indicates a state of reclining along a horizontal plane: *He lies down to sleep. He lay on the beach all day*. It does not take a direct object. Its past tense is *lay*. Its past participle is *lain*. Its present participle is *lying*.

When *lie* means to make an untrue statement, the verb forms are *lie, lied, lying*.

LGBTQ+ – The abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer organizations at Western and across the country. The + is now appropriate to use as of 2016, according to Western's Equal Opportunity Office.

lifelong – Think about the literal meaning of this before using it, as in: *Jesse Bishop was a lifelong drug addict who had spent 20 of his 46 years in prison*. You might be a lifelong resident of New York or a lifelong churchgoer or, at a stretch, a lifelong lover of music. But unless the unfortunate Bishop turned to drugs at a remarkably early age, *lifelong* is too literal a word to describe his addiction.

like, as, such as – The Associated Press Stylebook has changed its rule on this and now allows “like” and “such as” to be used interchangeably.

However, these rules are preferable:

--Use *like* as a preposition to compare nouns and pronouns: *Jim Smith blocks like a pro*. The conjunction *as* is the correct word to introduce clauses: *Smith blocks the linebacker as he should*.

--Use *such as* to introduce examples and lists: *Smith's favorite football players, such as Russell Wilson and Tom Brady, threw touchdown passes...*

local – Avoid unnecessary use of the word, as in: *Local volunteers from the community served the breakfast* or *The local man lives near Western's campus*. If a qualifier is necessary, use a more specific word instead, such as *Bellingham* or *Whatcom County*.

***MAC Gym** – Avoid use of this on first reference – most people don't know what this is. On first reference, use Multi-Activity Court Gym in the Wade King Student Recreation Center. MAC Gym is acceptable on second reference.

magazine names – See *titles*. Capitalize the name but do not place it in quotes or use italics. Lowercase magazine unless it is part of the publication's formal title: *Harper's Magazine*, *Newsweek magazine*. At Western, it's *Klipsun magazine* but *The Planet magazine* (note capitalized “The”). Check the masthead (the big name at the top of each issue) if in doubt.

millions, billions – Try to avoid long numbers with lots of zeroes, as in *7,000,000,000*. Instead, write *7 billion*. Also remember how to tell the difference between 1 million and 1 billion when you're looking at such a number. **Note:** Don't compare millions to billions — at least not without giving some context or reminding readers somehow that a billion is a lot more than a million.

money – For even dollar amounts, don't use zeroes: \$15 (not \$15.00)

more than/over – Use “more than” to refer to an amount and “over” to refer to a distance. Example: *More than 50 people showed up for the event. The cow jumped over the anaconda*.

media – In the sense of mass communication, such as magazines, newspapers, the news services, radio and television, the word is plural: *The news media are resisting attempts to limit their freedom.*

misspell – If there is one word you don't want to misspell in print, it is this one.

Mount – Spell out in all uses, including the names of communities and of mountains: *Mount Vernon, Mount Baker, Mount Baker Highway.* The only exception is proper names, such as *the Mt. Baker Ski Area.*

***Mount Baker Theatre** – proper name. See *theater.*

***Multi-Purpose Room** – The Viking Union spells it this way. Note the hyphen and capital *M, P* and *R.*

***myWestern** – One word in reference to sign-in for Western's website. Note the lower-case *m* and capital *W.*

names – In general, use only last names on second reference. For people 15 or younger, generally refer to them by first name on second reference unless the story is a serious one involving, for example, a major crime. With 16- or 17-year-olds, use the surname unless it's a light-hearted story. Use the surname at 18 and older.

nauseous, nauseated – People feel nauseated. *Nauseous* is an adjective describing something that causes nausea: *a nauseous odor.*

nerve-racking – Preferred spelling

newspaper names – Capitalize *the* in a paper's name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known: *The Western Front, The Bellingham Herald, the Record-Journal.* Do not place the name in quotes or italics. Check the masthead at the top of the paper when in doubt for capitalization and hyphenation. When citing an article, the preferred form is: *an Aug. 27, 2005, Lynden Tribune article.* (Do not italicize names; it's done here for emphasis only.)

north campus – Don't capitalize when referring to areas on or off campus. Same for south campus.

9/11 – *Sept. 11* is the preferred term to use in describing the terrorist attacks in the United States Sept. 11, 2001. *9/11* can be acceptable in certain wording or in quotations.

noon, midnight – Use these rather than 12 p.m. or 12 a.m., but just know that noon is 12 p.m. and midnight is 12 a.m. Also, according to AP, midnight is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning.

numerals – Spell out whole numbers below 10; use figures for 10 and above, excluding certain cases such as ages, measurements or distances. (See numerals in AP Stylebook for all exceptions.) *Typical examples: They had three sons and two daughters. They had a fleet of 10 station wagons and two buses.*

obscenities, profanities, vulgarities – Avoid in most cases. AP does not use them in stories unless they are part of direct quotations and there is a compelling reason for them. Western's publications are more lax; obscenities can sometimes be used outside quotations, but there should still be a compelling reason for them. Discuss use with editors.

occur, take place – Both weak, but when you must use them, use them correctly. *Take place* is better reserved for scheduled events: *The convention will take place Saturday.* When what is being described is accidental, *occur* is the better word: *The accident occurred on York Street.*

off of – Don't use "off of" – it's redundant. Simply use "off" or "of," depending on context.

Old Main, Old Main Theater

on campus, on-campus – Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: *The Communications Facility is on campus. The Distinguished Lecture Series is an on-campus event.* Same for *off campus* and *off-campus*.

online – One word in all cases for the computer connection term.

The Outback – The Associated Students Environmental Center's farm on campus. ("The" is capitalized.)

over, more than – In early 2014, AP changed this rule that formerly required the use of "more than" for quantity. "Over" is now acceptable with numerals and quantities. *Example: Over 200 people attended the event.*

passer-by, passers-by – NOT passerby or passerbys.

percent – One word. Use figures and decimals: *1 percent, 2.5 percent.* For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero: *0.6 percent.*

***Performing Arts Center (PAC)** – Note the plural *Arts*. *PAC* on second references. Also: *Mainstage*, NOT *Main stage*, *mainstage* or *main stage*.

pipeline – One word.

prepositions (at the end of sentences) – Avoid this if you can, but don't make a perfectly good sentence worse by blindly adhering to the edicts of your sixth-grade teacher. In some sentences, the preposition could scarcely come anywhere but at the end: *This bed hasn't been slept in. What is the world coming to?*

pro-choice, pro-life – Avoid when at all possible. **Always** ask the source what his/her stance is because the terms *pro-life* and *pro-choice* can be misleading and biased.

profanity – Avoid in most cases. AP does not use them in stories unless they are part of direct quotations and there is a compelling reason for them. *Western's* publications are more lax; obscenities can sometimes be used outside quotations, but there should still be a compelling reason for them. Discuss use with editors.

professor – Never abbreviate; lowercase before a name. Do not continue to use on second reference unless as part of a quotation. Note: Use correct title. Most teachers at *Western* have a specific title, such as associate professor, senior instructor, etc.

purposefully – done with purpose (different than *purposely*)

purposely – done on purpose (different than *purposefully*)

queer – Queer has become an inclusive umbrella term for the LGBTQ* community. However, don't assume someone identifies with the word queer.

quotation marks – For quotes within quotes, alternate between double quotation marks and single marks: She *said*, “He told me, ‘I love you.’” No space between marks when two quoted elements end at the same time.

The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, 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. “I finished my paper!” she said. but “I finished my paper about ‘The Catcher in the Rye!’” she said.

***race, ethnicity, citizenship** – Ask sources how they identify in terms of nationality, ethnicity, etc if appropriate to story

Race is not the same as ethnicity or culture. Race is a socially constructed category and has no scientific, biological or geographic basis at all. Avoid using race unless necessary. Avoid generalizations based on race or ethnicity. Do not assume that appearance defines nationality or cultural background. Ask how sources identify. Do not use: *colored people*, *non-white* or any racial slurs. Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples and race: Arab, Caucasian, French-Canadian, Inuit, etc.

Ethnicity, heritage, culture and race are to only be used as adjectives and not nouns. For example: a Japanese-American man, a Norwegian-American person, etc. People are not their descriptors, therefore it can be used as description and not as their sole identifier.

Consider if mentioning race, ethnicity, nationality, etc. is relevant to the story.

ranges – The correct form is \$12 million to \$14 million, not \$12 to \$14 million.

rec center – Use full name on first reference: Wade King Student Recreation Center. Lowercase *rec center* on second reference.

résumé – Note accents.

Ridgeway/The Ridge – Ridgeway residence halls on first reference, Ridgeway or The Ridge acceptable on second reference.

rock ’n’ roll – Note the placement and direction of the apostrophes.

***rooms on campus** – Example: *The panel will take place in Communications Facility room 115.*

***said** – Generally use past tense: *said*. Avoid *says*, *implied*, *remarked*, *exclaimed* or similar words. With the exception of long titles, always name then *said*. Example: *Western senior Jessica Araujo said*. IN GENERAL: There is no set rule, but if there are four or more words in a person’s title, put “said” before the title.

***second reference** – Well-known abbreviations are acceptable on second reference. Thus, Internal Revenue Service can become “*the IRS*” the second time you refer to it. Avoid using unfamiliar abbreviations. If you are writing about the Left-Handed Dogcatchers Association, do NOT refer to it as LHDA on second reference. Instead, call it “the association” or “the group.” Don’t think that putting parentheses around an odd abbreviation makes it OK to use repeatedly. It still looks funny. Here’s an example of what to avoid: *the Left-Handed Dogcatchers Association (LHDA) met last night. The LHDA decided to catch some left-handed dogs.*

***Sedro-Woolley** – Note the hyphen and double letters.

***Sex Positivity/Positive** – No dash; use a forward slash. Same goes for Body Positivity/Positive.

***sexual orientation** – Use this term, not “sexual preference” or “lifestyle choice.” Do not assume heterosexual orientation. When appropriate, use examples of same-sex partners, families, lives and experiences. Do not treat as a spectacle or oddity. Avoid defaulting to umbrella terms such as “gay” or “homosexual.” Ask people how they identify.

Sexual orientation is different than gender identity.

Always consider whether information about a person’s sexual orientation (or race, or ethnicity, or disability... etc.) is even relevant to the story. If it’s not, then don’t include it.

When in doubt, refer to GLAAD Media Guide: <http://www.glaad.org/reference/lgb>

Bruce Shepard – Correct spelling for Western Washington University’s president.

slang – AP says to, in general, avoid slang, the highly informal language that is outside of conventional or standard usage. Klipsun Magazine (and to a lesser degree The Western Front) allows most slang as long as it is understandable to readers and is appropriate to the context. Do not use slang just to use it, however. When you’re on the fence, use the correct term.

smartphone – One word. Also, *cellphone*.

Science, Math, and Technology Education – This name is for the Western major and the building. Note the Oxford comma is part of the official name. Second reference: SMATE. Specify if needed by saying the SMATE major or the SMATE building. It is never S.M.A.T.E.

song titles, album titles – Put in quotation marks.

south campus – Don’t capitalize when referring to areas on or off campus. Same for north campus.

***spokesperson** – Not spokesman or spokeswoman (Western Front differs from the AP on this style)

***student titles** – Need student name and year. Year before name. Example: *Western senior Jessica Araujo*. Not: Jessica Araujo, a senior at Western.

***subjects/departments** – Academic subjects and departments are lowercased, except those that are proper nouns, Spanish, French, Japanese, East Asian studies. *Example: A professor from the English department... A professor from the political science department...*

suspect descriptions – Do not use race-focused descriptions that will cause people to single out a race. Use actual physical descriptions instead: height, age, weight, etc. It is acceptable to describe skin color if the police provide that information, but be consistent and use “white skin” or something similar for Caucasians. Do not assume the person is white if no skin color is provided.

suspensive hyphenation – The form: *The 5- and 6-year-olds attend morning classes.*

***such as** – Use "such as" instead of "like" when giving examples.

Examples: Western senior Greg Applegate has traveled to countries such as Guatemala, Mexico and Canada.

teams – Use "its" when referring to "the team," but use "their" when referring to the team by its plural nickname. Examples: *The Western women's soccer team won its second game in a row. The Vikings improved their record to 4-2.*

temperature – Use figures unless the temperature is zero. Examples: *It's 5 degrees outside. I hope it warms to 9 or 10.*

that, which, who – *That* is used to restrict meaning and is never preceded by a comma: *I like books that are long.*

--*Which* is used to elaborate on meaning and is always preceded by a comma: *I like that book, which has a blue cover.*

--*Who* is used in place of *that* or *which* when referring to people: *The professor who teaches this class is standing by the chalkboard. Mary Jones, who chairs the committee, arrived 20 minutes late.*

The Western Front – The official name of Western's campus newspaper. Note that "the" is in the official title and capitalized. On second reference, the Front is acceptable (lowercase "the").

theater - Use this spelling unless the proper name uses *theatre* (*Mount Baker Theatre, theatre arts department*).

their, there, they're – *Their* is a possessive pronoun: *They went to their house.*

There indicates a place or direction: *We went there for dinner.*

They're is a contraction for *they are*: *They're all sophomores.* Note that it is better to avoid contractions and use *they are*.

three-D - Use 3-D as the preferred style.

***time** – Range of times: If both times are either a.m. or p.m., use 9-11 a.m. or 5-8 p.m.; otherwise 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

***time/date/place** – In that order. *Example: The event will be at 6 p.m. May 3 in Bond Hall room 205.*

titles – Quotations around all book titles, album titles, movie titles. Capitalize formal titles immediately before a name, and do not separate the title from the name with a comma. *Examples: I saw President Clinton. I got to meet Pope John Paul II.* Titles that appear after a name or standing alone are ALMOST NEVER capitalized. If you're wondering about those exceptions, see the AP entry on "nobility." Also note that sometimes, a person's title is set off by commas. In those cases, it is lower case. If you're wondering when to use a comma between title and name, see "appositives," or just listen for the natural pause when you say the sentence aloud. If you pause, use a comma. *Examples: The president, (PAUSE) Barack Obama, (PAUSE) ate a sandwich. President (NO PAUSE) Barack Obama ate a sandwich.*

today, tonight, tomorrow, yesterday – These words seldom have a place in newspapers outside quotations. Use the specific date instead.

toward – Never “towards”

T-shirt – Note capital T and hyphen.

***trans, transgender, transsexual** – These are gender identities, not sexual orientations. Always ask how a person identifies. Always use the pronoun of a person’s choosing. Ask, “What pronoun do you prefer?” NOT “What are you?” or “Are you a man or a woman?”

Underground Coffeehouse – Note “Coffeehouse” is one word.

unique – It means one-of-a-kind. Do not describe something as *rather unique* or *most unique*. What is that? It’s either unique or it’s not.

***United States** – Abbreviate as “U.S.” when used as an adjective before a noun. *Example: The U.S. hockey team... or The U.S. economy....* Otherwise, spell out.

***University Police** – Use this on first reference. Not WWU Police or Western Police.

***Vendors Row** – Note caps and no possessive for the row of vendors in front of the Viking Union.

***Viking Union** – *VU* is acceptable on second reference.

Viking Union Multi-Purpose Room – Don’t use MPR on second reference.

***Wade King Student Recreation Center** – Use full name on first reference. Lowercase *rec center* on second reference. Also: Wade King Student Recreation Turf Field (second reference: *rec center field*)

***waitlist** – One word, no hyphen, when referring to Western’s system for class registration.

Washington state – Lowercase “state” unless you are referring to Washington State University.

weapons – Know the difference between a revolver and an automatic. Know correct style for a .45-caliber pistol. See AP Stylebook under weapons.

Web, website, Internet – Be alert to capitalization and one vs. two words. It’s website and Internet, never: Web site, Website, web site, internet.

Also note these style rules: webcam, webcast, webmaster, all lowercase and one word. However: Web page, Web, World Wide Web.

Western Front – The official name of Western’s campus newspaper is The Western Front. Note that “the” is in the official title and capitalized. On second reference, the Front is acceptable (lowercase “the”).

Western Libraries – Full name for the many units of the library system.

Western Washington University – Use *Western* in all print references. Use WWU or Western Washington University only in quotations or proper names.

--For online, specify *Western Washington University* on first reference, then use *Western* on second reference if it’s clear from the context. (Be alert to multiple colleges using Western as part of their names; avoid confusion when necessary by using Western Washington.)

WhAAM – Whatcom All-ages Arts & Music on first reference; WhAAM is acceptable on second reference. Note the plural *Arts* and the lower-case *h*.

Whatcom Transportation Authority – Not *Transit*. *WTA* on subsequent references.

wildlife – One word.

will – Can often (although not always) be removed. Example: *The board meets Oct. 7* instead of *The board will meet Oct. 7*.

Woodring College of Education

World War I, World War II – Use Roman numerals. On second reference: *WWI*, *WWII*, or better yet, if the meaning is clear, say: *the war*.

World Wide Web – Better yet, *the Web*. Also, *Web page*. But *website*, *webcam*, *webcast*, *webmaster*.

SPORTS

(see the sports section at the back of the AP Stylebook for additional guidelines)

50K – Running term referring to length of race, in this case 50 kilometers.

Carver Gym – Use Sam Carver Gymnasium on first reference, Carver Gym on later references.

cross country team – No hyphen

Division I- Use roman numerals

Great Northwest Athletic Conference – Spell out on first reference. *GNAC* on second reference.

Harrington Field – Use full name on first reference: Robert S. Harrington Field.

layup – One word, no hyphen for basketball term

mascot – Use *Western's mascot* on first reference; *Victor Viking* on second reference.

postseason/preseason – One word, no hyphen

rec center – Use full name on first reference: Wade King Student Recreation Center. Lowercase *rec center* on second reference.

Saint Martin's University – Note *Saint* is not abbreviated and *Martin's* has an apostrophe

team names for Western athletics – Use this style: the Western men's soccer team (not Western's men's soccer team). Note: Only one possessive and keep team lowercase.

Sports Titles- follow the rule for titles. Class standing/position/name. (ex. Senior forward Britney Spears) or (senior forward and midfielder Britney Spears)

varsity-4 – Rowing team terminology referring to a four-person crew in one boat.

Vikings – Never “Lady Vikings” for women's sports teams

Wade King Student Recreation Turf Field – Second reference: rec center field.

women's softball – For positions, use *baseman* for both baseball and softball.

WORDS TO NEVER USE, unless in a direct quote:

Good rule: Avoid most “ly” words and “catch-all” words. Be specific. Some examples: basically, really

Grassroots

“Green” anything. What does “green” even mean?

Impacted

Irregardless (IT'S NOT A WORD.)

Literally (often misused)

Promoting diversity

Raising awareness

Sustainability

Utilize, prioritize or anything else “-ize.”

Very