

NACCU Brand Standards, Graphics Guidelines & Style Guide

Published June 2012; Updated October 2024

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Introduction

NACCU desires to present a professional image in all association communications and publications, both in the use of the association identity marks and graphics as well as language. To that end this guide has been established to help staff, committees, and members when creating publications, papers, and other electronic communications (including email and web sites) for and about NACCU.

All marketing communications should consistently represent the NACCU brand tagline, “Leveraging the Power of your Credential” staying within the boundaries of the graphic standards to ensure that the brand personality of NACCU is well communicated and supported visually in all marketing materials.

This guide also provides some common guidelines for language as well as specific usage of association terms. The style guide is not all-encompassing, so if there is a question regarding a specific use that is not addressed here, consult the AP Style Guide.

The Name

Like AARP, NASCAR, and NASA, the NACCU name is an acronym, derived from the National Association of Campus Card Users. After continued use over its long history, the NACCU name has become well known and well respected within the realm of the higher education community it serves. When speaking of or referring to the name of the association, we will continue to use “NACCU” as the official name of the association. Capital letters should always be used for NACCU in written form.

Signature Line

The name “National Association of Campus Card Users” is the signature line that references the audiences served by NACCU. While this signature line will not be used in the logo itself, this verbiage can be used as a reference in written materials.

Tagline

In effective marketing communications, the tagline is critical because it *reflects the brand of the association*. The tagline for NACCU, “Leveraging the Power of your Credential,” effectively serves as the umbrella statement for more complex messages that speak with specificity about NACCU and the benefits the association provides to its members. When used in written materials, the tagline should always be written using initial caps. When possible, the logo should include the tagline text.

Brand Consistency

Because it is a vital part of the branding process to achieve a cohesive and consistent image in all materials, NACCU requires strict adherence to the standards and guidelines in this guide.

If you have questions or need clarification about the standards for the NACCU brand, please contact:

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Primary Association Logo

The logo pictured to the right is the official NACCU logo and is an integral part of the corporate image program. This signature logo is comprised of key elements:

- The Name: NACCU
- The Icon “Connecting” Symbol
- The Brand Tagline: “Leveraging the Power of your Credential”

This signature logo serves as the primary identification element for all NACCU marketing and branding initiatives. This logo may not be re-created, re-typeset, or re-proportioned. When enlarged, the logo should maintain proportional dimensions (specific dimensions are not required; however, do not modify the size of the individual elements).



Whenever possible, use the logo in color to further support the brand identity. When necessary or for cost-effectiveness, it is permissible to print the logo in black or white.



Because there are times when the logo may be used on promotional materials or items that may be reprinted in a small size (pens, golf tees, etc.), the logo may be used without the tagline as follows:



The “Connecting” icon may be used as a graphic element in NACCU-branded materials, in whole or part, as follows:

The icon may be displayed at 100% opacity or at partial opacity.



What NOT to Do with the Logo

- Do not print the logo in a color other than the official colors (except black or white when using one-color applications).
- Do not screen back the logo.
- Do not use any graphic effects on the logo.
- Do not place additional graphics in any position that compete visually or obscure the logo (see minimum borders below).
- Do not alter the typestyle or spacing in the logo.
- Do not place the logo over a photo.
- Do not use the logo in headlines or text.

Minimum Borders around Logo

Maintain a minimum clear space equal to the height of the **center blue circle** in the NACCU logo at all times around the logo. No graphic elements or typography should impede this minimum clear space. Whenever possible, maintain a larger clear area.

Brand Color Scheme

The Pantone Matching System (PMS) spot colors are most commonly used to produce materials such as letterhead, envelopes, and business cards. The official colors chosen for the NACCU brand are as follows:

Light Blue: PMS 298

Light Green: PMS 376

Black: Pantone Process Black

When producing materials in four-color or when color photos are used in marketing materials, Process Colors are normally used (colors made up of different percentages of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black, or CMYK). The breakdown for the process colors is as follows:

Light Blue: C=69, M=3, Y=0, K=0

Light Green: C=53, M=0, Y=96, K=0

Black: C=0, M=0, Y=0, K=100

It is essential to use the exact PMS color, or the exact process color mix, to achieve the correct color of the NACCU logo. The PMS colors should always be used at full strength and should not be lightened, screened back, or changed in any way. Please use actual PMS color swatches available from your printer.

When producing graphics for the Web, use the following Hex color codes:

Light Blue: 1ebcee

Light Green: 84c447

Black: 000000

Font Usage

The NACCU logo and tagline must be used in its original form, with no font substitutions.

Publications and documents should be designed using the following fonts:

Frutiger
Myriad or Myriad Web Pro

Web and email correspondence should be designed using the following fonts:

Aptos, Calibri, Lato, Sans Serif

Paper Stocks

Papers with different textures or surfaces absorb ink in their own way and can cause wide variations in color when printed. Because the logo may be printed on a variety of materials (business cards, flyers, banners, etc.), it is very important to check the color against an actual color swatch (available from your printer).

It is important to recognize that the use of the logo on certain palette colors will be attractive and complementary to the logo (palettes like white, black, or off-white). Likewise, use of the logo with other color palettes (yellow, orange, pink, etc.) will result in an unattractive presentation.

It is recommended that all materials be printed on a white paper stock. If printed on a colored stock, the background area of the logo and tagline should be white whenever possible. If not possible, use of the logo in all black or white may be called for.

Language Style Guide

A

a or an

Use the article *a* before words pronounced with a beginning consonant sound, including a pronounced *h*, a long *u* and the word *one*. Examples: *a historian, a horse, a hysterical joke, a union, such a one as this*. Use *an* before words pronounced with a beginning vowel sound and a silent *h* (which results in a vowel sound). Examples: *an onion, an umbrella, an hour, an honest man*.

When an article appears before an abbreviation, acronym, or numeral, choose one based upon pronunciation.

academic degrees

Two-year undergraduate degrees are *associate degrees*. When referring to generic bachelor's or master's degrees, make them lowercase and possessive. When referring to a specific degree by its full name, write *Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts*, and so forth. When referring to the PhD in general, use *doctorate* for the noun and *doctoral* for the adjective. Consider your audience when deciding whether to abbreviate or spell out on first reference. If abbreviating, don't use periods (which is contrary to AP). Examples: *BA, MA, MD, PhD*.

The discipline in which the degree was earned also remains lowercase.

Do not routinely list all degrees in copy, but use as needed in the context. MD and RN are the two degrees most often needed to clarify a person's position of medical authority.

If listing a degree is necessitated by the audience and the degree is listed after a name, it must be set off with commas.

acronyms

An acronym is an abbreviation, written all in capital letters with no periods. When using an acronym, spell out what the letters stand for and follow with the acronym in parentheses on first reference.

affect, effect

Affect is almost always a verb (unless used as a psychological term). *Effect* is always a noun, unless you're *effecting* change.

African-American

Hyphenate. The term is acceptable for an American black person of African descent, but be careful not to apply it to all blacks. For instance, Caribbean descendants generally refer to themselves as Caribbean-Americans. The term *black* is also acceptable. Follow an individual's preference.

ages

Always use figures. Examples: The student is 19 years old. The student, 24, has a daughter 6 months old. The policy is 4 years old.

Ages used as a noun or an adjective before a noun require hyphens. Examples: The 19-year-old student ran for office. The racetrack features 3-year-olds today.

An age range requires no apostrophe. Example: *The instructor was in her 30s*.

all together, altogether

All together means together in a single group. *Altogether* means completely.

alumni

Alumnus refers to one male who attended a college or to a former student of unspecified gender. *Alumna* refers to one female. *Alumni* refers to two or more former students, any gender. *Alumnae* refers to two or more females.

a.m., p.m.

In written text: Lowercase with periods. Avoid redundancies such as *10 a.m. Tuesday morning*.
In tables or charts: Lowercase or small capitals without periods.

ampersand

Avoid, unless it is part of a company or institution's legal name.

Annual

Avoid *first annual*, but *second annual* is acceptable.

any one, anyone

Any one means any one person or item. *Anyone* means anyone in a general sense. Examples:
Does anyone really know what time it is? You can have one of the raffle prizes; pick up any_one you would like.

any way, anyway

Any way is a noun and is always two words. *Anyway* is an adverb and always one word. Examples: *Is there any way out of this mess?* (substitute "a way") *I hate those kinds of problems, but I'll help you anyway.*

assume, presume

Assume means to suppose to be true without proof. *Presume* means to take for granted in the absence of proof to the contrary. *Presume* can also mean "take excessive liberties," as in the adjective form *presumptuous*.

assure, ensure, insure

Assure means to give someone confidence. *Ensure* means to make certain. *Insure* means to guarantee against loss (as in to issue an insurance policy). Examples: *The boss assures me that he will hire the right person because doing so will ensure the company continues.*

awards

Capitalize the word *award* or *medal* only if it is part of a proper name. Abbreviate all other uses. Current NACCU award names are shown below:

- Best Card Design
- Best Video(s)

- Distinguished Service Award
- Innovative Technology Award
- J. Paul Melanson Award
- New Professional Award
- Outstanding Volunteer Award

B

bi-

Generally don't use a hyphen. Examples: *bimonthly*, *bilateral*, *bilingual*.

black

Acceptable for a person of the black race, according to [AP Stylebook](#). Can be used interchangeably with *African-American* if you are sure the person is an American with African heritage.

bylaws, corporate bylaws

board of directors

See officer and position titles and correct capitalization under **titles**.

C

capitalization

Capitalize only proper names. Avoid capitalizing generic terms (such as university, college, professor, student life). Specific examples follow:

- **awards** — Always lowercase the word *award* when not used as part of an official name: *the awards committee*, *the writing award*, *the XYZ Award*
- **committee names** — Capitalize full proper names of officially established committees. Lowercase otherwise. See NACCU listing of committees under **committees**.
- **company, product names** — Capitalize company and specific product names.
- **degrees** — Lowercase: *bachelor of arts*, *master's degree*, *doctorate*.
- **divisions** — Capitalize full proper names; lowercase unofficial division names.
- **events and programs** — The names of some events can serve as either generic or proper names. For NACCU events and programs, see listing under **events and programs**.
- **proper names** — Capitalize the full proper name. On second reference, lowercase the shorter form.
- **schools** — Capitalize full proper names of schools.
- **titles** — Lowercase and spell out most titles relating to people (see NACCU board titles under **titles**).

cents

Always use numerals. Write out the word when there is no dollar figure. Do not use zeros after the dollars to indicate no cents. Examples: *5 cents*, *\$10.59*, *\$25*.

CEO, CSO

Chief executive officer can be referred to as a *CEO* on first reference, but all other C-level positions should be spelled out the first time. Abbreviations can always be used on second reference. Use in tables and charts could be an exception.

chair

Preferred over *chairperson*. *Chairman* and *chairwoman* are also acceptable, especially if it is the preference of the person.

cities

Follow the name of a U.S. city by its appropriate state abbreviation unless its location would be readily known to the reader. Example: *Eugene, OR*. Usage will vary depending upon context and the geographic boundaries of one's readers.

Regardless, the following cities are so well known that they do not need to be followed by a state name:

Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington. (See also [states](#).)

For cities outside of the United States, follow the name of a city with the country in which it resides. The following cities, however, are so well known that including the name of its country is unnecessary:

Amsterdam, Baghdad, Bangkok, Beijing, Beirut, Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, Djibouti, Dublin, Geneva, Gibraltar, Guatemala City, Havana, Helsinki, Hong Kong, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kuwait City, London, Luxembourg, Macau, Madrid, Milan, Monaco, Montreal, Moscow, Munich, New Delhi, Panama City, Paris, Prague, Quebec City, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Marino, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore, Stockholm, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto, Vatican City, Vienna, Zurich.

co-

Use hyphen only when forming words that indicate occupation or status. Example: *co-worker*.

collective nouns

Some words can be singular or plural, depending upon their usage. Collective nouns can take a singular verb when they denote a single unit, but they can take a plural noun when they denote individual items. Examples:

- *The faculty is meeting today.* (as a unit)
- *Many faculty are working on their projects this weekend.* (individual members)
- *A million dollars is a large request.* (a unit)
- *A million dollars were collected.* (individual items)

colons

Capitalize the first word following the colon if it begins a complete sentence or is a proper noun. Examples: *The goal was simple: Keep customers first. Three words best describe the day: wet, dreary, disappointing.*

commas

- **in numbers** — Use commas in numbers of four digits or more. Examples: *1,248 or 47,193.*
- **in a series** — When a conjunction joins the last two elements in a series, a comma should appear before the conjunction. Examples: *She took a photograph of her parents, the president, and the vice president. I want no ifs, ands, or buts. The meal consisted of soup, salad, and macaroni and cheese.*
- **with Jr. or Sr.** — Do not use in names. Example: *Ron Culhane Jr.*
- **with dates and times** — Offset the date with commas, but not the time.
- **with which** — Phrases beginning with the word *which* are non-essential clauses. Place commas before and after the phrase. Example: *My car, which is a Ford, needs new tires.*
- **in phrases giving times, distances, measurements** — Do not use commas. Examples: *He was 6 feet 4 inches tall. She ran the relay in 2 minutes 3 seconds.*

committees

NACCU's official committees are as follows and should always be capitalized.

- Awards Committee
- Conference Committee
- Engagement Committee
- Investment Committee
- NACCU Ambassador Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Technology Research Committee
- Volunteer Development Committee

compare to, compare with

When you *compare to*, you look at the similarities.

When you *compare with*, you look at similarities and differences.

computer terms

Spelling of Internet-related words are aligned with the AP stylebook:

- the Web (abbreviated proper name), Web page
- website, webcast, webmaster
- Also:
 - app (short for *application* on second reference)
 - Blu-ray
 - Bluetooth
 - cyberspace
 - CD-ROM
 - download
 - dot-com (informal adjective)

- DNS (domain name system)
- DSL (digital subscriber line)
- email
- Facebook
- firewall
- freeware
- FTP (file transfer protocol)
- home page
- html (hypertext markup language)
- http (hypertext transfer protocol)
- hyperlink
- Internet, Internet2
- Intranet
- IoT
- IP address (Internet protocol address)
- Java (a trademark)
- listserv
- login, logon, logoff, log (nouns)
- log in, log on, log off (verbs) / **example:** *You can log in to this account.*
- metadata
- MP3; MP4
- online
- retweet
- screen saver
- shareware
- slide show (two words)
- smart phone (two words)
- Twitter (tweet)
- URL (Uniform Resource Locator)
- VoIP (Use *Voice over Internet Protocol* on first reference.)
- Wi-Fi
- YouTube
- Zip drive, Zip disks (registered trademarks)

CR80News

D

dangling modifiers

Make sure your modifiers actually refer to the proper word.

Examples:

Incorrect: Looking for safer ways to treat drinking water, the college's \$750,000 grant will investigate The college is looking, not the grant.

Correct: Looking for safer ways to treat drinking water, the college has applied for and received a \$750,000 grant from the Safer Water Association.

dashes

Dashes are longer than hyphens. Hyphens should not be used in the place of dashes. Dashes are always preceded and followed by a space, except at the start of a paragraph and sports agate summaries.

Publishing systems enable you to create an em-dash (the length of a capital M). Word-processing programs feature dashes as a "symbol," found under the "Insert" menu. Most software programs also allow the character to be key stroked. The help menu will provide instructions for your software. When dashes cannot be produced, two hyphens typed together are substituted. For Internet use, two hyphens may be used for a dash because some browsers have trouble reading the symbol that some software uses to create the dash. If using two hyphens, insert the space before and after the pair.

Dashes can be used in the following instances:

- to denote an abrupt change in thought or add emphasis to a pause (example: *The actor spent nine hours improvising — and wrinkling — in a hot tub.*)
- to set off a list items in place of commas because the extra punctuation would be confusing (example: *Most movies shot on location have poor sound quality because of the environment — planes, traffic, and people making noise.*)
- to set off attribution of a quote (example: *"Wherever you go, go with all your heart." — Confucius*) Note: The period goes at the end of the sentence, not at the end of the attribution.

dates

For readability and clarity, express dates of events in this sequence: time, day, date, place.

Abbreviate all months except *March, April, May, June, and July*.

Use only Arabic numbers after the month, not *first* or *1st*.

different from, different than, differently

Different from is usually right. *Different than* requires a verb. Examples: *Holiday parties at a state institution are different than parties corporations have. Holiday parties at a state institution are different from parties in the corporate world.*

When using the word *differently*, use *than*. Example: *He led the meeting differently than I would have.*

directions and regions

Lowercase compass directions. Capitalize words that denote specific regions. Examples: *He drove west. The Midwest is known for great basketball.* (Consult [AP stylebook](#) for additional information.)

E

e.g.

This Latin abbreviation means "for the sake of an example." Do not use this to mean "that is." You should be able to substitute *e.g.* for the phrase "for example." A comma always follows it, and the phrase is either set off by a dash or put in parentheses.

email

No hyphen, lowercase. (But words like *e-book* and *e-commerce* retain the hyphen.)

For references to email functions that appear as official names, generally, write the names uppercase with quotation marks, separated by commas when needed, treating them as titles to distinguish them from generic words. Example: *To send the same message again, click on "Message," "Send Again."*

emeritus

Not the same as *retired*. The titles *emeritus* (male) or *emerita* (female) are bestowed on many, but not all, retiring faculty. Place the word *emeritus* after the formal title.

Emeriti (all men or both men and women) and *emeritae* (all women) are plural nouns.

Emeritus and *emerita* can be singular nouns or adjectives for singular and plural nouns. Examples: *among the ranks of emeriti* (plural noun), *among the ranks of emeritus professors* (singular adjective). You can, however, change *emeritus* to *emeriti* when it follows a plural word. Example: *among the ranks of professors emeriti*.

ethnic references

In most general uses, the preferred terms are the following:

American Indian

Asian

Asian-American

black or African-American

Caucasian

Hispanic

Mexican-American

Pacific Islander

events and programs

Titles of an academic program are lowercase, unless proper names are used. Example: *the fashion design program*.

Capitalize the names of all NACCU-specific programs (see list below) unless speaking generally. Examples: *I plan to attend the NACCU Annual Conference in Austin. NACCU annual conferences always include networking and educational opportunities.*

- Annual Conference
- Credential U
- Data Summit
- Industry Essentials Institute (IEI)
- LEAP
- NACCU Campus Profile
- NACCU Near You
- NACCU NetworX
- Mentor Program
- SAGs
- The Vault
- Vendor Xchange
- Virtual Expo Showcase (VES)

exclamation mark

As a rule, avoid using exclamation marks. They tend to look trite. If you absolutely must, never use more than one, and follow these guidelines in regard to placement with quotation marks:

Place the exclamation mark inside quotation marks when it is part of the quoted material. Examples: *“How wonderful!” he exclaimed. “Never!” she shouted.*

Place the mark outside quotation marks when it is not part of the quoted material. Example: *I hated reading Spenser’s “Faerie Queene”!*

F

farther, further

Farther refers to physical distance. *Further* refers to an extension of time or degree.

fewer, less

Fewer applies to numbers and modifies a plural noun. *Less* applies to quantities and modifies a singular noun. Example: *She now eats fewer meals and less candy.*

fiscal year

In copy for general external audiences, write out the word, lowercase, referencing both years in the period. Example: *fiscal year 2011-12*. For internal documents in which abbreviations are standard, use *FY11*.

freshman, freshmen

To avoid gender bias, the term *first-year student* is acceptable.

As an adjective, use *freshman*, not *freshmen*, which is always a noun. Examples: *Student Government is hosting a welcome party for the freshman class. All freshmen are invited.*

G

gender

When possible, avoid words that assume maleness. Use *humanity* instead of *mankind*. Male pronouns (*he, his*) are acceptable when the antecedent could be male or female — and are preferred over combination pronoun forms: *he or she, his/her*. Yet a better option is to revise nouns to plural forms: *they, theirs*. Avoid forcing neutrality with a construction that calls attention to itself. Avoid manufactured words such as *spokesperson*.

generations

Lowercase the words *traditionalists, millennials, and baby boomers*. Uppercase *Generation X*, in keeping with AP style.

H

headlines

Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns. If a single headline continues on more than one line, do not capitalize the first word of the other lines. Use numerals for all numbers and single quotation marks where quotation marks are needed. Follow standard spelling for all words, except for *US*, *UN*, and *UK*, which have no periods in headlines. For two-letter U.S. state abbreviations in headlines, use no periods.

holidays, holy days

Capitalize formal names. Examples: *Christmas Eve, Kwanzaa, Rosh Hashanah*. Although *Hanukkah* has several spellings, this version is preferred by Associated Press. The 10 federal holidays follow: *New Year's, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day or Indigenous Peoples Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas*.

hyphens

In type, hyphens are different from dashes.

Hyphens are sometimes used to avoid ambiguity. Examples: *He recovered from financial collapse. He recovered his sofa in gray leather.*

Hyphens are used for connecting words, as in compound words (*father-in-law*), prefixes (*pre-election*), suffixes (*emulsion-like*), fractions (*two-fifths*), ratios (*2-to-1 ratio*), and scores (*12-6 victory*). They are also used to create compound modifiers (*full-time employee*). To determine if a prefix or suffix requires a hyphen, refer to [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#).

Hyphens are also used to denote timeframes, such as *9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.* No spaces are required before or after the hyphen.

I

i.e.

This Latin abbreviation means "that is." Do not use this to mean "for example." You should be able to substitute *i.e.* for the phrase "in other words." A comma always follows it, and the phrase is either set off by a dash or put in parentheses.

initials

Generally avoid using middle initials. When two initials are used together, omit the space in the middle. Example: *M.J. Nicholson*.

Internet

Uppercase as a proper name to distinguish it from other kinds of nets. May also be referred to as the *Net*, also uppercase. Spelling of Internet-related words are aligned with the AP stylebook:

- the Web (abbreviated proper name)
- Web page, Web feed
- website, webcam, webcast, webmaster

Related terms:

- app (acceptable on second reference for application)
- avatar
- blog
- click-throughs
- cyberspace
- download
- dot-com (informal adjective)
- DNS (domain name system)
- DSL (digital subscriber line)

- e-book, e-magazine
- emoticon
- Facebook
- firewall
- Flickr
- freeware
- FTP (file transfer protocol)
- geolocation, geotagging
- Google, Googling, Googled
- home page
- hyperlink
- Internet
- Internet2
- intranet
- IP address (Internet protocol address)
- iPad, iPhone
- Java (a trademark)
- keyword
- LinkedIn
- instant messaging (IM acceptable on second reference, also IM'ing, IM'ed)
- listserv
- login, logon, logoff, log (nouns)
- log in, log on, log off (verbs) / example: *You can log on to this account.*
- metadata
- microsite
- MP3; MP4
- online
- retweet
- RSS (abbreviation for Really Simply Syndication)
- search engine optimization (SEO acceptable on second reference)
- shareware
- social media
- social networks
- status update
- text messaging
- Twitter
- unfriend
- URL (Uniform Resource Locator)
- VoIP (Use Voice over Internet Protocol on first reference.)
- widget
- wiki
- Wikipedia
- YouTube (one word)

its, it's

The first is possessive; the second is a contraction of *it is*.

J

junior, senior

Abbreviate as *Jr.* and *Sr.* with full names. Do not precede by, or follow with, a comma.

L

less / fewer

Less represents quantities and units of measure (e.g., expenses, work, respect, money). Example: *Everyone has less work than I do.*

Fewer represents multiple things, things you can count (e.g., co-workers, faculty, appointments). Example: *I wish I had fewer appointments.*

Less also represents singular items. Example: *I actually have one less paper on my desk this morning. But I have fewer papers today than yesterday.*

like / as

Like applies to nouns and pronouns. Example: *The sun shone like a red rubber ball.*

As applies to phrases and clauses containing a verb. Example: *She ran as if her life depended upon it.*

likely / probably

Likely is an adjective, meaning a likely outcome, not an adverb or synonym for *probably*. Examples: *The board is likely to do so.* Never say: *The board will likely do so.*

lineup / line up

Lineup is a noun. *Line up* is a verb.

links

Generally, write the names of Internet links uppercase with quotation marks, separated by commas when needed, treating them as titles to distinguish them from generic words.

M

MA, MS

No periods.

master class

Lowercase. No apostrophe s.

master's degree (See entry for [academic degrees](#).)

may, might

Use *may* if something may have really happened. Use *might* if something is totally hypothetical. Examples: *Her proposal may have been approved if she had submitted a formal report.* (possible) *Her proposal might have changed the future of the company if she had submitted it.* (purely hypothetical)

mentor, mentee

members

NACCU has two types of members:

- Institutional Members
- Corporate Members

MD

As with all academic degrees, do not use periods. (This is an exception to AP.)

moot

Means “debatable.” Use *irrelevant* or *null*, if that’s what you mean.

multidisciplinary

Multidisciplinary means many disciplines are present. *Interdisciplinary* means many disciplines are not only present, but are working together to accomplish something. *Cross-disciplinary* relates to the involvement of two or more academic disciplines, but in a less formalized involvement than multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary situations. Examples: A *multidisciplinary* meeting might attract faculty from several colleges, each making individual presentations. An *interdisciplinary* meeting would attract the same experts, but instead of just listening to one another's presentation, they work together toward a common goal.

N

NACCU listserv

New Year's Day

The word “year” is possessive in this usage and requires an apostrophe. Examples: *New Year's Eve*, but *happy new year*.

NACCU Office

9/11

This format is acceptable when referring to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

non-

Generally, hyphens are not used for words with this prefix. Hyphens are necessary before proper nouns or when a word is not listed in the dictionary.

noon

Use the word *noon* instead of *12 p.m.* in all instances.

numbers

Use Arabic numerals for numbers 10 and higher. Spell out numbers under 10. This holds true for all casual uses and distances. Examples: *hundreds of items*, *two miles*. The exceptions, which use numerals exclusively, are ages (*the 4-year-old child*), acres, cents, dimensions (*the rug is 6 feet wide*), dollar amounts (*\$1 million*), formulas, heights, military and political designations (*2nd District Court*, *7th Fleet*), percentages (*7 percent*), ratios (*a 2-1 ratio*), sizes (*a size 9 shoe*), speeds (*50 mph*), temperatures (*except zero*), volume (*2 ounces*), and weights.

Numerals in proper names are written as the organization writes them. When the word number is used with a figure to express a concept, use "No." Examples: *No. 1 team*, *No. 3 choice*. Consult the AP stylebook entry for [numerals](#).

For plural numerals, add an s with no apostrophe. Example: *1990s*

O

on to / onto

When *on* is part of the verb, it's two words. Example: *Step on to the stage*. *Log on to the website*. If it is part of the preposition, it's one word. Example: *Attach the Word document onto the previous document*.

over / more than

Over relates to a concept of space. When referring to quantities, use *more than*. Examples: *Over 6 feet tall*. *More than \$1,000*. *More than 10 minutes*.

P

percent

Use as one word, preceded by numerals. Example: *5 percent*.

periods

Only one space should follow the period at the end of a sentence.

persons, people

Persons mean individuals with identities. *People* means a large and anonymous mass.

PhD

No periods.

plurals

- **compound words** — For those terms that include two or more separate words or a hyphenated word, add the *s* to the most significant word. Examples: *attorneys general*, *daughters-in-law*, *deputy chiefs of staff*, *lieutenant colonels*.
- **multiple letters** — Add an *s* with no apostrophe. Examples: *ABCs*, *VIPs*.
- **numerals** — Add an *s* with no apostrophe. Example: *1990s*.
- **single letters** — Add 's to avoid confusion. Example: *His report card was full of A's and B's*.

P.O. Box

Include periods in the abbreviation when used in editorial copy in brochures or publications. Omit the periods for U.S. postal use on labels and in tables and charts.

post

When referring to the Internet, avoid confusion with *publish*. You *publish on* a site and *post responses to* a site or *in* a chat room.

premier, premiere

The word with *e* on the end relates to entertainment (a first performance). This version is the only one with a verb form. *Premier* means leader of a country, as well as first or most important.

presently

One of its meanings is *in the near future*. To avoid confusion, use *currently*.

principal, principle

Principal (can be a noun or an adjective) refers to someone or something first in authority or importance. Examples: *school principal*, *principal player*, *principal problem*. *Principle* (a noun) refers to a fundamental truth. Example: *principle of self-determination*.

Q

quotation marks

Quotation marks or inverted commas (informally referred to as quotes or speech marks) are punctuation marks surrounding a quotation, direct speech, or a literal title or name. Quotation marks can also be used to indicate a different meaning of a word or phrase than the one typically associated with it and are often used to express irony. Quotes should not be used to provide emphasis.

Periods and commas, when used with quotation marks, always go within the quotation marks. Example: *The project is "long overdue," said Angela*. Dashes, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points go within quotation marks only when they relate to the quoted matter. Examples: *You never saw "The Wizard of Oz"?* *Ask him, "How do you plan to implement the proposal?"*

quintessential

Means perfect example of quality. Not a synonym for *epitome*.

R

re-

When a word begins with the prefix *re*, hyphenate the word if the first letter after the prefix is an e. Examples: *re-elect*, *re-enter*. Otherwise, follow [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#) and common sense. Examples: *resign* (quit), *re-sign* (sign again).

regard

Use the phrase *in regard to*, not *in regards to*.

room numbers

For consistency (before building names), use the following format: *The class will meet in Room 392, Swift Hall.*

S

self

Always hyphenate when used as a prefix. Examples: *self-appointed*, *self-cleaning*, *self-destructive*.

semicolons

When semicolons are needed in a series to clarify individual elements requiring extra commas, use the semicolon before the word *and*.

slide show

Two words.

social media

This term refers to tools for sharing information among online communities. This can be done through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, Groupon, Living Social, Flickr, wikis, and other forums.

spaces

One space should be placed after all punctuation, including periods and question marks, at the end of sentences.

telephone numbers

Use this format: XXX-XXX-XXXX, ext. XX.

that, which

That and *which* are two pronouns that are often used incorrectly. In general, if the clause in question could be omitted without leaving the noun it modifies incomplete or without altering the meaning, *which* should be used to introduce the clause, preceded by a comma. If the clause is limiting or defining, *that* is the word to use.

Examples:

Incorrect: *He has invented a process, which will supply the world with free fuel.* (Consult AP Stylebook entries for **essential clauses** and **non-essential clauses**.)

Correct: *He has invented a process that will supply the world with free fuel. The process, which was invented by A.J. Smith, will supply the world with free fuel.*

time, duration

Consistently use either the format *from 3 to 5 p.m.*, or *3-5 p.m.* In most cases, use only the starting time. The ending time is relevant only when listing a series of events.

In general, list the time, day, and date in this order: *2 p.m., Wednesday, April 1.*

time of day

Use *noon* or *midnight*, rather than *12 a.m.* or *12 p.m.*, which are confusing. Avoid redundancy, as in *10 a.m. this morning.*

titles

Lowercase and spell out most titles relating to people.

- **formal titles** — The only title to be uppercase is a formal title appearing directly before a name. Formal titles reflect positions so impressive that they are as much a part of people's identities as their names. Formal titles appearing before a name are lowercase when they are set off with commas.
- **occupational titles** — Lowercase titles that mostly describe occupations.
- **abbreviated formal titles** — These formal titles are capitalized and abbreviated when used before a name outside quotations. Examples: *Dr.*, *Gov.*, *Lt. Gov.*, *Rep.*, *Sen.*, and certain military ranks.
- **honorifics** — Honorifics, such as *Esq.* and *His Royal Highness*, are not used in general editorial text.
- NACCU board of directors titles:
 - President
 - President Elect
 - Immediate Past President
 - Treasurer
 - Assistant Treasurer
 - Secretary

toward

Not towards.

trademarks

Trademarks must be capitalized, yet certain trademarks have become so common in English usage that we forget they are trademarks. Examples: *Allen wrench*, *AstroTurf*, *Band-Aid*, *Breathalyzer*, *Dumpster*, *Fiberglas*, *Freon*, *Frisbee*, *Heimlich Maneuver*, *Jacuzzi*, *Jaws of Life*, *Jazzercise*, *Jell-O*, *Kleenex*, *LaserJet printer*, *Laundromat*, *Lucite*, *Mace tear gas*, *Magic Marker*, *Muzak*, *Photostat*, *Plexiglas*, *Realtor*, *Rolodex*, *Scotch Tape*, *Seeing Eye dogs*, *Sno-Kone*, *Styrofoam*, *Xerox*.

Trademarks should be followed with generic terms, when appropriate. Example: *Kleenex tissues*. Better yet, avoid trademarks and just use the generic term as long as it is easily understood.

For a more complete listing of trademarks, visit the [International Trademark Association's website](#).

The Associated Press Stylebook states, "There is no legal requirement to use the trademark symbol."

Twitter / X

A Twitter message is called a *tweet*. The verb form of the word is *to Twitter* or *to tweet*.

U

under way

Two words in nearly all uses. According to AP, *underway* is used as an adjective before a noun only in a nautical sense. Example: *an underway flotilla*.

V

verb usage

When the words *every* or *many a* appear before a word, the subject takes a singular verb. Examples: *Every man, woman, and child was asked to leave*. *Many a college student wishes to return to the easy days of high school*.

verbal agreement

Verbal means *written or oral*. Use *oral*, if that's what you mean.

versus

Abbreviate as *vs.* in all uses.

virtual

Not a synonym for *actual* or *nearly*. It means something has the effect but not the form. Example: *When the president resigned, the vice president became the virtual head of the company, even though he had not been so named*.

W

Web addresses, URLs

To save space, do not include *http://* if the URL contains *www*. If the URL does not include *www*, the *http://* may be necessary to avoid confusion. Use your own best judgment, but be sure the URL can be perceived as a URL and not as plain text.

Always include a period at the end of a sentence even if a Web address or email address appears at the end. When possible, enclose URLs and email addresses in parentheses or brackets.

If a Web address cannot be kept together on one line of copy, never add a hyphen or other punctuation to a URL. Allow a line break to occur only before a period, slash, dash, or underscore so it remains obvious that the two lines belong together.

website

One word, but *Web page* is two words.

while

While means *during the time that*. It is used to link simultaneous occurrences. Do not use to mean *although*, *whereas*, *and*, or *but*. In such circumstances, often only a semicolon is necessary.

Y

years

Set the year off with two commas when it appears with a full date. Example: *Jan. 15, 1993, was the target date*.

For decades, use an *s* without an apostrophe. Examples: *1960s and '60s*, not *the 1960's and '60's*. On first reference, use *1960s*, not *'60s*.

For centuries, the preferred format is the *20th century*, not the *1900s*.

Do not routinely name the current year unless it is necessary to avoid confusion. Example: *the April 1 meeting*.

For periods covering multiple years (academic and fiscal years, in particular), use *2006-07*, not *2006-2007*.

Writing about the end of a century is an exception. Example: *1999-2000*.

year-round

Hyphenate as an adjective and an adverb.

Source: Many of the examples above were borrowed from the University of Cincinnati Style Guide at www.uc.edu; adapted from Associated Press Stylebook.