The marketing and communications team has developed a set of guidelines to help members of the University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions speak and write in a unified way. Following these guidelines will enable the college to maintain a clear identity, as well as follow best practices, for communications regarding the college. We recommend that you refer to it whenever you develop communications or marketing materials.

If a particular issue is not noted below, please visit the UF Writing Guide or follow general Associated Press style.
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**Acronyms:**
In general, avoid alphabet soup. If acronyms are necessary, on first reference, spell out the full name, followed by a comma and the word “or” with the acronym. The American Occupational Therapy Association, or AOTA.

**Addresses:**
When listing an address in marketing materials, follow AP style.
- Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address. E., W., S., N. would use periods. NW, SW, NE, SE would not. 13611 NW 1st Lane, Suite 200
- When listing an address as part of a complete address with the city, state and zip code, the abbreviations for the state must be used with the zip code. Gainesville, FL 32603
- Street, Avenue and Boulevard are only abbreviated when used with numbered addresses. Road and other related causeways such as court, drive, lane, way, etc. aren’t abbreviated. 123 Public Relations Blvd., 12 Brady St., 26 Media Ave., 1 Championship Road.

**Apostrophes:**
When writing about decades, do not include an apostrophe. 1920s
- Apostrophes and pronouns: Personal pronouns do not include apostrophes. The dog was wagging its tail.
Alumni:
Identify all alumni with the degree program and class year.
The term alumni refers to two or more graduates (groups of male or male and female). Alumnus refers to one male graduate. Alumna refers to one female graduate. Alumnae is plural for two or more female graduates.
Examples:
- Alumna: feminine singular Jane is an alumna of the college
- Alumnus: male singular Jake is an alumnus of the college
- Alumnae: feminine plural Jane and Jill are alumnae of the college
- Alumni: male and mixed gender plural Jake and Jill are alumni

Attribution:
When quoting a source, place the person’s name ahead of the verb.
Smith said, not said Smith.

And versus &:
Outside of proper nouns, such as company names, the symbol & should not be used in place of the word and.

C
Capitalization:
In general, most nouns (and other words) in a sentence are not capitalized. If in doubt, err on the side of not capitalizing. Also, fields of study are not capitalized.

Capitalization after colons:
Capitalize the first word after a colon in a sentence if it is a proper noun, starts a complete sentence, or begins a question.
**Commas:**
No serial or Oxford comma before the “and” in a simple series.
- Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction. I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.
  - Use a comma also before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases. The main points to consider are 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.
  - Also, use a comma before “and” in a compound sentence.
  - When quoting a source, the period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**
Use full name on first reference and CDC on second reference.

**Classes, courses:**
Lowercase when referring to courses and classes. I took psychology class. Uppercase if referring to a specific name of a class or the class uses a proper noun or numeral. I took Psychology 6500.

**College:**
On first reference, use University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions. UF PHHP is acceptable on second reference.
**Composition titles:**
Magazine and newspaper titles aren’t italicized; just capitalized. For composition titles such as books, journal articles, video games, films, TV shows, works of art, speeches, etc., use quotation marks.

**Dates and times:**
Month, day: Use numerals for days without st, nd, rd or th. Do not separate months and years with a comma. When referencing a month or a month and year without days, spell out all months. No comma is needed between the two. When referencing a complete date — month, day and year — spell out the day of the week and abbreviate the month. Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone. January 2016 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month. His birthday is May 8. Feb. 14, 2013, was the target date. She testified that it was Friday, Dec. 3, when the crash occurred. For times, use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m. Use “to” to separate times in a range: 11:30 a.m. to noon; 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. The event will be held from noon to 4 p.m.

**Degrees:**
Capitalize the proper names of degrees, such as Master of Public Health. Use lowercase when referring to degrees in general. She has master’s degrees in public health and physical therapy.

For credentials, use periods in degrees with two or three letters, and omit them when there are four or more letters. Ph.D., M.P.H., OTR/L
Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference. June Jones, Ph.D., not Dr. June Jones, Ph.D.

**Department names:**
Use lowercase for department names in external communications. In written text, use the word “and” instead of an ampersand in those departments that have the conjunction. Department acronyms are acceptable on second reference in internal communications. PHHP departments include:
- Department of biostatistics
- Department of clinical and health psychology
- Department of environmental and global health
- Department of epidemiology
- Department of health services research, management and policy
- Department of occupational therapy
- Department of physical therapy
- Department of speech, language, and hearing sciences

**E.g.: and i.e.:**
Note that both e.g. and i.e. are always followed by a comma and are not italicized. In text, it is preferable to use terms such as “for example” and “that is” rather than the abbreviations.

**Email:**
No hyphen.
Em-dash:
The long dash (—) is called an em-dash (so called because it is approx. the width of a capital letter M in the typeface being used). Insert a space before and after the em-dash. One of the most common uses of the em-dash is to signal an abrupt change in thought in a sentence. Through her long reign, the queen and her family have adapted – usually skillfully – to the changing taste of the time.

En-dash:
When preceded by “from” in text, use the word “to,” not the en-dash. The event will be held from 9 to 11 am.

Headlines and subheads:
Headlines should be in sentence case. Only the first word should be capitalized unless it is an official name of a facility, city or state. The subhead should be treated the same.

Health care:
Two words unless part of a proper name.

Hyphen:
Think of hyphens as an aid to readers’ comprehension. If a hyphen makes the meaning clearer, use it. If it just adds clutter and distraction to the sentence, don’t use it.

Do use a hyphen if it’s needed to make the meaning clear and avoid unintended meanings. small-business owner, better-qualified candidate, little-known song
Hyphenate well-combinations before a noun, but not after. A well-known judge, but the judge is well known.

Interim:
Don’t capitalize when preceding a name. ....said interim President Albert E. Gator.

Its/it’s:
Its is possessive. It’s is a contraction for it is.

Job titles:
Only capitalize formal titles when they precede an individual’s name. If it falls after, lowercase. Mayor John Appleseed signed the proclamation; John Appleseed, mayor of Leominster, Massachusetts, attended the banquet. Some helpful tips include:

- Always check the accuracy of the academic title before publishing. This can easily be done with the college, department or unit’s communicator who will be able to share the most relevant information for that person. Or look at their profile in the UF Health Directory.
- Do not assume any faculty member is a full professor. Check with the department if necessary. Sometimes titles reflecting recent appointments or promotions do not immediately appear in campus directories or websites.
- Avoid preceding a name with a long title.
Link text:
When including links in the narrative, avoid copying and pasting in URLs. Instead, incorporate links into the text. Information on tuition costs is available on the MPH website versus Information on tuition costs is available at https://mph.ufl.edu/prospective-students/costs-and-financial-aid/. This improves accessibility for anyone using a screen reader to access the information on the web.

Majors, programs:
Do NOT capitalize majors, programs, specializations or concentrations of study when they are not part of a designated degree. She received a bachelor’s in public health. She majored in neuroscience.

Months and seasons.
When using a month with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec., and spell out when using alone or with just a year. Hint: The months never abbreviated fall chronologically and are five letters or fewer – March, April, May, June and July. The seasons – winter, spring, summer and fall – are never capitalized.

Numbers:
Write out numbers one through nine; use figures for 10 and above. Jodie bought three apples and 12 kiwis. For percentages, use numerals with “%.” The # can be used on images but No. is preferred for headlines and copy.
Online:
One word.

Phone numbers:
Use dashes between numbers. 000-000-0000

Point of view:
Use third-person language for external communications. The college was the first college of its kind situated within an academic health center.

Punctuation:
- Apostrophes: When writing about decades, do not include an apostrophe. 1920s
  - Apostrophes and pronouns: Personal pronouns do not include apostrophes. The dog was wagging its tail.
- Capitalization: In general, most nouns (and other words) in a sentence are not capitalized. If in doubt, err on the side of not capitalizing. Also, fields of study are not capitalized.
- Capitalization after colons: Capitalize the first word after a colon in a sentence if it is a proper noun, starts a complete sentence, or begins a question.
- Commas: No serial or Oxford comma before the “and” in a simple series.
  - Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction: I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.
Use a comma also before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases. The main points to consider are 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.

Also, use a comma before “and” in a compound sentence.

When quoting a source, the period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.

S

SACSCOC:
The appropriate style for referencing UF’s accreditor’s name is Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Include the abbreviation in parentheses (SACSCOC) following the first reference to the organization in a section. Do not use “SACS.” In accreditation report narratives, use this paragraph description on first reference to UF’s accreditation status:

- The University of Florida is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, education specialist, and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of the University of Florida.

Social and behavioral sciences:
A concentration area within the Master of Public Health and the Ph.D. in public health. Use lowercase in external communications.
**Spaces between sentences:**
One space between sentences, not two.

**State names:**
Follow AP style when listing states. The names of the 50 U.S. states should be spelled out in text and headings. In lists or tables, the abbreviations may be used. Note that the two-letter all-caps abbreviations are used only in postal addresses.

**Student descriptors:**
The gender-neutral terms first-year student, second-year student, third-year student and fourth-year student are preferred by the university administration for freshman, sophomore, junior and senior, respectively, in all uses.

**University of Florida name:**
The University of Florida is the institution’s official name and is used on all formal occasions and on first reference. On the second and additional references, “Florida” is recommended. For further references for brevity and limitation of space, “UF” should be used. Do not capitalize common uses of university.

**UF Health:**
Refers collectively to the UF Health colleges, hospitals, UF Health Physician outpatient practices and the associated facilities and programs. UF Health may be used in the copy when referencing the collective academic health center. Never abbreviate UF Health to UFH.
• UF Health should be spelled out as University of Florida Health on the first reference in the text or body copy and may be written as UF Health on subsequent references.
• When written as text or body copy, there should always be a space between UF and Health. UF Health versus UFHealth.
• View a list of the formal names of UF Health facilities and services.

**United States, U.S.:**
Use periods in the abbreviation, U.S. within texts. In headlines, it's US (no periods).

**Utilize:**
According to AP, “From our perspective, use is always better than utilize. It's shorter, more conversational and means the same thing.”

**Versus:**
Versus should be spelled out. Only in short expressions is versus shortened to vs., cat vs. dog

**Website, webpage:**
One word, lowercase.

**Websites and URLs:**
If you are listing a website address on a printed document or in a digital space, do not use http:// or www. in front of the address. Examples of appropriate uses: ufl.edu and college.ufl.edu. The recommendation is not to use www., but please check if your URL functions without this.
THANK YOU!

“Sources: Associated Press Stylebook, UF writing style guide, UF Health News and Communications style guide