

# Southeast Community College Quick-Reference Writing Style Guide

The goal of communication is our purpose, and the following guide may serve as a quick reference for you when producing copy for a publication. Most entries are either style that refers to educational institutions or common mistakes that are often made when writing for publications.

Although Southeast has adopted some of its own style, the majority comes from The Associated Press Stylebook. For a more comprehensive guide, please refer to The Associated Press Stylebook. Please note that exceptions are allowed, with permission of the Administrative Director of Public Information and Marketing.

## Academic degrees

Capitalize abbreviations (A.A.S., B.A., M.S., M.B.A., Ph.D., etc.) and use periods. Capitalize **complete names of degrees** but do not capitalize when degrees are referred to informally.

- associate degree (singular, no 's apostrophe)
- He holds a bachelor's degree in English.
- He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.
- He holds a master's degree in psychology.
- He holds a Master of Science degree in psychology.

### When the complete name of the award is used:

- Associate of Applied Science degree
- Associate of Occupational Studies degree
- Associate of Arts degree
- Associate of Science degree
- Diploma
- Certificate

### When the complete name of the associate degree is not used:

- He received his associate degree in Nondestructive Testing Technology.

### When diploma and certificate are used:

- He received a Diploma in Nondestructive Testing Technology.
- He received a Certificate in the Nondestructive Testing Technology program.
- He received an Associate of Applied Science degree in Criminal Justice.

### Others:

To complete a diploma in the program, courses are generally taken in the following order.

## Adviser/Advisor

Although AP Style says use adviser, at SCC use advisor, as that person serves in an advisory capacity. "Advisor" is usually listed as an alternate spelling of "adviser" and has gained common usage as a TITLE (for someone in an ADVISORY position). One source suggests that an "adviser" is someone who gives advice, whereas an "advisor" is someone specifically tasked to provide such advice.

## Capitalization

Capitalize the complete **formal names** of departments, divisions, offices, teams, programs of study, academic terms, course titles and references to the College, when it refers to SCC.

- Humanities Department
- Continuing Education Division
- President's Office
- CEO's Advisory Team
- Agriculture Business & Management Technology program
- the College
- Academic terms: Winter Quarter 20xx.

Lowercase any fragmentary title (humanities), the word "program" in general program names: The Graphic Design|Media Arts program.

## state of Nebraska

We don't capitalize words such as city, state, federal, national, etc. when those words are used as modifiers. There are federal regulations about the relationship of city and state governments. Even as nouns, these words do not need to be capitalized: "The city of New York is in the state of New York" (but it's New York City).

Misdemeanor or felony convictions may prevent a graduate from acquiring a state license. (Contact the State Board of Nursing with questions.)

The Auto Collision Repair Technology program is certified, and was the first auto collision repair program certified in the state of Nebraska.

## Chair

Refer to the head of a Southeast academic program as the chair, not head, chairman, chairwoman, or chairperson.

Exception: Board of Governors Chairperson

## Co-

Retain the hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives and verbs that indicate occupation or status: co-author, co-chair, co-pilot, etc.

Use no hyphen in other combinations: coed, cooperate, cooperative, coexist, etc. In reference to SCC's cooperative students, you may use co-op students (to not confuse with coop).

## Colon

Use a colon before a list when the list is preceded by a complete independent clause.

- John has all the supplies: books, pencils, pens, and paper. (The list is preceded by a complete independent clause.)
- To prepare for school you need books, pencils, pens, and paper. (No colon needed)
- To prepare for school you need the following: books, pencils, pens, and paper.

## Corequisite

One word

## Dean

Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: Dean Jane Doe. Lowercase in other uses: Jane Doe, dean of students; the dean.

## Dean's list

Lowercase in all uses: He/she is on the dean's list.

## Dorm

This is incorrect usage. Use Residence Hall.

## Prerequisite

One word

## Punctuation

### Comma in a Series:

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series: The flag is red, white and blue.

**Placement with quotes:** Commas ALWAYS go inside quotation marks.

**With Hometowns, Ages, Years, States, and Appositives:** Use a comma to set off an individual's hometown when it is placed in apposition to a name. If an individual's age is used, set it off by commas:

- John Q. Public, Milford, and Jane Doe, Beatrice, were there.
- Jane Doe, 29, Lincoln, Neb., was present.
- I was born on Dec. 25, 1955, in Lincoln, Neb.
- I was born in Lincoln, Neb., on Dec. 25, 1955.

An appositive is a word or phrase that says the same thing as a word or phrase next to it.

Example: I saw my boss, John Bossman, in the hall. (My boss and John Bossman are identical.) However, do not place a comma after a title that precedes a name. Example: Academic Transfer Instructor John Doe made a presentation.

## Seasons

Lowercase spring, summer, fall, winter and derivatives such as springtime unless part of a formal name such as our academic terms.

- Spring Quarter 20xx.
- Students are admitted in the Spring and Fall quarters. (if plural, don't cap quarter)
- My favorite season is spring.

## Second Reference

Use SCC, Southeast or the College on second reference. Spell out Southeast Community College on first reference.

## Titles

Capitalize formal titles immediately before a name, and do not separate the title from the name by a comma. Book titles, computer game titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, album and song titles, radio and television program titles, and the titles of lectures, speeches and works of art should be in quotations. Do not use italics, underline or bold.

Example: Vice President for Administrative Services John Doe organized the meeting. A person's title is set off by commas and is lowercase when used after a person's name.

Example: John Doe, vice president for administrative services, organized the meeting.

## Vice President

No hyphen.