



AUIS Editorial Style Guide

The AUIS Editorial Style Guide is primarily based on the Associated Press Stylebook and is designed to be a resource for faculty and staff members writing on behalf of the University. It aims to provide a guide to encourage and ensure consistency across the University's written communications.

For any style questions not included within these guidelines, please refer to the AP Stylebook. If you have any queries about using this guide, please contact the Communications Office by emailing communications@auis.edu.iq

Abbreviations and Acronyms

A few universally recognized abbreviations are required in some circumstances, and some others are acceptable, depending on the context. Avoid using abbreviations and acronyms that a member of the general public would not quickly recognize.

Academic Degrees

Spell out academic degrees in lower cases. Capitalize when using the official name of the degree. Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree*, *a master's*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts* or *Master of Science*. Use abbreviations of academic degrees, such as *B.A.*, *M.A.*, *LL.D.*, and *Ph.D.* only after a full name. When used after a full name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: *John Snow, Ph.D., spoke*.

Academic Titles

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *chancellor*, *chairman*, etc. when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

Addresses

Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: Pennsylvania Avenue.
Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues.
Always use figures for an address number.

When writing floor numbers, only write out numbers up to ten and use figures for 11 onwards.

The standard address for AUIS is:

The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani

Kirkuk Main Road, Raparin

Sulaimani, KRG-Iraq

Books and Other titles

Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters, and put quotation marks around book, movie, opera, play, poem, song, television program, lecture, speech and works of art titles. Do not underline titles.

Follow the same capitalization rules but do not put quotes around the Bible. Use italics for catalogs of reference material, almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazettes, handbooks, magazines and newspapers.

Capitalization

Avoid unnecessary capitals.

Capitalize proper nouns, proper names and popular names: *the South Side*.

Capitalize words that are derived from a proper noun and still depend on it for their meaning: *American, English, Marxism, Shakespearean*.

Capitalize sentences and titles.

Departments

Capitalize department when using the official name: *Department of Agriculture*.

If, as is common practice, the title is flopped, drop the *of* and retain the capitalization: *the State Department, the Treasury Department*.

Lowercase *department* in plural uses, but capitalize the proper name element: *the departments of Labor and Justice*.

Lowercase *the department* whenever it stands alone.

Date and time

Always use Arabic Figures, without *st, nd, rd* or *th*.

Always capitalize the name of months. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,* and *Dec.* Spell out when using along, or with a year alone.

When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas: *January 1972 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month.*

Write a full date as month, day and then year, placing a comma after the day of the month: *December 25, 2010*. If only writing the month and year do not use commas: *December 2010*.

Use the days of the week, not *today, tonight* in print copy.

Use figures except for *noon* and *midnight*. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *11 a.m.*, *1 p.m.*

Numbers

Ages

Always use figures for people and animals (but not for inanimates). Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun: *A 5-year-old boy*, but *the boy is 5 years old*.

Numerals

Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence, except if the numeral identifies a calendar year.

Spell out numbers below 10, use figures for 10 and above.

Always use figures and symbols for percentages, measurements and currency.

Ordinal numbers

Spell out *first* through *ninth* when they indicate sequence in time or location: *first base*; *the First Amendment*; *he was first in line*. Starting with *10th* use figures. Use *1st*, *2nd*, *3rd*, *4th*, etc. when the sequence has been assigned in forming names, primarily used in geographic, military and political designations: *1st Ward*; *7th Fleet*; *1st Sgt.*

Over vs. More Than

More than is preferred with numerals: *There were more than 20 members involved in the student organization*.

Percent

Use figures and spell out percent: *0.6 percent*; *1 percent*. The % symbol can be used only in tables, statistical copy and headlines.

Punctuation

Colon

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The company will make good all the losses*. But: *There were three considerations: expense, time and feasibility*.

Commas

Use a comma after each item in a series, but not before a conjunction (and, or), such as: *The building is large, modern and beautiful*. Use a comma when a complex series of items or with an additional conjunction such as: *The building is large, modern, and wired, and beautiful*.

Exclamation marks

Do not use exclamation marks, except to show extreme emotion. Try not to use them in headings or more than once on a page.

Hyphens

Use hyphens to join only when needed to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. Hyphenate words such as *lower-division*, *lower-level* and *upper-level* when using as adjectives. *He made all ‘A’s’ in his upper-level courses.*

Use “on-campus” or “off-campus” when used as an adjective before a noun, but use “on campus” and “off campus” when it follows a noun. *She read the brochure about off-campus living. He lived on campus.*

Hyphenate part time and full time only when they are used to modify a noun: *She is a full-time student, and she works part time.*

Punctuating quotations

Always place the comma (and most other punctuation) before the closing quote: “*The surgery went well,*” said Jill Smith, sister of the injured player.

Quotation marks

Always place commas and periods inside a closing quotation mark, but not semicolons or colons.

For DIRECT QUOTATIONS: to surround the exact words of a speaker or writer when reported in a story:

“I have no intention of staying,” he replied.

For RUNNING QUOTATIONS: If a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotations, do not put close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph. Do, however, put open-quote marks at the start of the second paragraph.

Semicolon

Use to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey but less than the separation that a period implies.

Use to clarify a series that includes a number of commas. Include a semicolon before the conjunction: *The drama club at AUIS will perform in Sulaimani, KRG-Iraq; Doha, UAE; and Istanbul, Turkey.*

Serial comma

Do not use the final comma before a conjunction in a series: *She is taking chemistry, biology and English courses this semester.*

Titles

Capitalize formal titles when used directly before an individual’s name.

Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual’s name.

Lowercase and spell out titles in constructions that set them off from a name by commas: *The vice president, Nelson Rockefeller, declined to run again. Paul VI, the current pope, does not plan to retire.*

Capitalize abbreviated formal titles when used before a name outside quotations: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen.* Spell out all except *Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.* when they are used in quotations.

Use *Dr.* in the first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who hold a doctoral degree. Care should be taken to assure that the individual's specialty is stated in the first or second reference. Do not continue the use of *Dr.* in subsequent references. Do not use *Dr.* for those who hold honorary doctorates.

For titles of nobility, capitalize the full title when it serves as the alternate name for an individual.