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This style guide for university communicators describes SFU’s “house style” for delivering clear, consistent communication materials regardless of format, i.e., print, digital.

Similar to most Canadian universities, SFU follows Canadian Press (CP) style and Canadian spelling.

For issues not covered in this guide, refer to *The Canadian Press Stylebook* and *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* handbook, which are the foundation for this guide.

Use *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* for spellings and issues not mentioned in either the SFU or CP guides.

This guide serves as a supplement to these reference books and outlines SFU exceptions to CP style, based on current practice by other universities as well as leading media outlets such as the *Globe and Mail* and the *New York Times*.

This guide is a living document. It is constantly changing as new words are added and definitions, spellings and grammar conventions change. When in doubt, search this guide for the latest rules.

For questions or suggested additions, contact: style_guide@sfu.ca

**REFERENCES AND SOURCES**

*CP Stylebook* (16th ed.)

*CP Caps and Spelling* (20th ed.)

*CP Stylebook and Caps and Spelling Online Edition* (fee-based)

*The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (2nd Ed.)

*The Elements of Style* (4th Ed.)

*Talking Gender: A Guide to Nonsexist Communication*
1.0 SFU STYLE
1.1 ABOUT SFU

OUR NAME
Spell out Simon Fraser University (SFU) on first use, and SFU thereafter. We no longer capitalize the word “University” on its own when referring to SFU in a sentence.

Example:
A number of factors guided the university in updating its policies.

CAMPUS
For printed and digital materials, do not refer to our campuses as SFU Surrey, SFU Vancouver or SFU Burnaby.

Examples:
• SFU’s Surrey campus, the Surrey campus
• SFU’s Vancouver campus, the Vancouver campus
• SFU’s Burnaby campus, the Burnaby campus

Examples:
• Some students at SFU’s Surrey campus also take classes at the Burnaby campus.
• SFU’s Burnaby and Surrey campuses are closed because of heavy snow.
• SFU students at the Vancouver and Burnaby campuses have been notified.

SCHOOLS
When introducing the name of an SFU school or faculty, preface with “SFU” rather than “the.” Market research shows that awareness and favourability increase when individual faculties and departments are associated with the parent brand.

Examples:
• On first reference: “Simon Fraser University’s Beedie School of Business” (vs “Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University” or “Simon Fraser University Beedie School of Business”)

• On subsequent reference of SFU: “SFU’s School for the Contemporary Arts” (vs. School for the Contemporary Arts at SFU” or “the SFU School for the Contemporary Arts”)

• Subsequent reference of Beedie: “SFU Beedie” (vs. just “Beedie”) or SFU School for the Contemporary Arts

FACULTIES
Examples:
• On first reference: “Simon Fraser University’s Faculty of Education
• On subsequent reference of SFU: SFU’s Faculty of Environment
• Subsequent reference of the faculty: SFU Science

ACADEMIC SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS
Capitalize the titles of the university president, vice-presidents (VPs) and associate vice-presidents (AVPs) when they immediately precede a person’s name. Do not capitalize a title when it is a partial designation, it follows a name or it is on second reference. Do not capitalize titles preceded by “former” or “acting.”

Examples:
• SFU President Andrew Petter
• Andrew Petter, SFU’s president
• The president
• VP Research Joy Johnson
• AVP External Relations Joanne Curry
• Joy Johnson, vice-president, research
• Jon Driver, vp academic
• Former president Michael Stevenson, acting dean John Smith

Where possible, refer to a student’s major or program and then, if appropriate, the faculty or school

Examples:
• Jane Wright, a computing science student in SFU’s Faculty of Applied Sciences, is graduating in June 2014.
• Computing science student Jane Wright is graduating in June 2014.
PHRASES TO DESCRIBE SFU

Tagline: Engaging the world. (see brand guideline)

General SFU boilerplate (current as of August 2014; will be updated as needed):

As Canada’s engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded almost 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is a leader amongst Canada’s comprehensive research universities and is ranked one of the top universities in the world under 50 years of age. With campuses in British Columbia’s three largest cities—Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby—SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 30,000 students, and boasts more than 130,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

Other SFU descriptors that can be used as subheads or as talking points for presentations:
• Canada’s engaged university
• Simon Fraser University: Engaging Students. Engaging Research. Engaging Communities.

1.2 ACADEMIC DEGREES

Degrees can be abbreviated or written out in full. When writing out in full, use lowercase and apostrophes.

EXAMPLES:
• SFU offers master’s degrees
• Colin holds a bachelor of arts from SFU

We no longer use periods in degree abbreviations:

BA—bachelor of arts
BA (Hons.)—bachelor of arts with honours
BComm.—bachelor of commerce
BEd—bachelor of education
BGS—bachelor of general studies
BFA—bachelor of fine arts
LLB—bachelor of laws
BMus—bachelor of music
BSc—bachelor of science
BSc (Hons.)—bachelor of science with honours
BASc—bachelor of applied science
EMBA—executive master of business administration
MA—master of arts; master’s
MBA—master of business administration
MEd—master of education
MFA—master of fine arts
MPH—master of public health
MPub—master of publishing
LLM—master of laws
MSc—master of science; master’s
MD—doctor of medicine
PhD—doctor of philosophy
LLD—doctor of laws
EdD—doctor of education
1.3 ACADEMIC TERMS

ALUMNI
Alumnus – a neutral term for graduates of any gender
Alumni – a neutral term for multiple graduates of any gender
Alum/alums – avoid using this term

EMERITUS/EMERITA
Emeritus – a neutral term for professors of any gender who have retired with distinction
Emeriti – a neutral term for multiple professors of any gender who have retired with distinction

FACULTY MEMBER
“Faculty” may be singular or plural. Use “faculty members” if you don’t like using faculty as a plural noun.

EXAMPLES:
- There are 14 faculty members in the department.
- The department has 14 faculty.

OTHER
Honorary doctorate, honorary degree—For these two terms, honorary is not spelled “honourary” as would be expected in Canadian spelling. But, an “honours” degree or a degree with “honours” is correct.
While the prefix “post” usually takes a hyphen, it does not take a hyphen for postdoctoral, postdoctorate, postgraduate. Post-secondary is hyphenated.

Do not hyphenate “grade point average” (GPA) or “cumulative grade point average” (CGPA). When giving a student’s GPA, reference it to the highest available GPA (4.33).

EXAMPLE:
- Dominique Dunne, a student in engineering science, earned a GPA of 3.6 out of a possible 4.33
1.4 ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL RULES

Only use abbreviations or acronyms (abbreviations pronounced as words) that your readers would immediately recognize without clarification.

EXAMPLES:
• CBC, NATO, SFU, Nabisco, radar, scuba

For unfamiliar abbreviations, spell out the full name first, followed in brackets by the abbreviation. Use the abbreviation alone for later references. Avoid “alphabet soup.” Find other ways of identifying your subjects instead of repeatedly using acronyms.

EXAMPLES:
The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) is a federal funding agency. NSERC supports post-secondary students and postdoctoral fellows in their studies. The agency promotes discovery and fosters innovation.

All-cap abbreviations don’t take periods unless the abbreviation is geographical, refers to a person or is a single letter.

EXAMPLES:
• MBA, RAM, URL, but U.S., B.C., P.E.I., W.A.C. Bennett, E. (for east)

Lowercase and mixed abbreviations usually take periods, with the exception of SFU academic degrees.

EXAMPLES:
• Mrs., Jr., lb., m.p.g., BSc, a.m., p.m.

Mixed abbreviations beginning and ending with a capital letter do not take periods.

EXAMPLES:
• PhD, U of A, PoW

Metric symbols take periods only at the end of a sentence:

EXAMPLES:
• mm, cm, m, km, km/h, g, t, mL, ha, kPa

FACULTIES

Faculty of Applied Sciences (FAS)
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)
Faculty, Beedie School of Business (BUS)—Use Beedie on second reference
Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (FCAT)
Faculty of Education (EDUC)
Faculty of Environment (FENV)
Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS)
Faculty of Science (SCI)

OFFICES

Office for Aboriginal Peoples (OAP)
Office of Francophone and Francophile Affairs (OFFA)
Office of Research Ethics (ORE)
Innovation Office (IO)

SCHOOLS*

School of Communication
School for the Contemporary Arts (SCA)
School of Interactive Arts and Technology (SIAT)
School of Resource and Environmental Management (SREM)
(This is a new change)
*Most schools use their field of study for short, i.e., SFU Communication, SFU Contemporary Arts.

PROVINCES, TERRITORIES AND AMERICAN STATES

Spell out Canadian provinces and territories and American state names standing alone.

Note: Use periods in abbreviated geographical place names. Eg. B.C., U.S.A. Yukon and Nunavut are not abbreviated.

Use CP style abbreviations when used with city names in text. Use postal abbreviations only in addresses, not in text.

Canadian provinces and abbreviations: http://tinyurl.com/3bw9sbo
American states and abbreviations: http://tinyurl.com/lsuxqkd
1.5 CAMPUS BUILDINGS, CENTRES

Find names and spelling for all SFU buildings as follows:

BURNABY CAMPUS BUILDINGS
www.sfu.ca/fs/Campus-Facility-Profiles/Building_Information

VANCOUVER CAMPUS BUILDINGS
www.vancouver.sfu.ca/welcome/locations.html

SURREY CAMPUS
www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/surrey/images/CampusService/CampusGuide_booklet.pdf

RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES
www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/centres.html

1.6 TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SFU’s location on traditional First Nations lands should be acknowledged with one of the following two phrases, which are suitable to all SFU campuses and locations in the Lower Mainland.

EXAMPLE:
SFU acknowledges the Squamish, Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Katzie and Kwikwetlem peoples on whose traditional territories our three campuses stand.
OR
SFU acknowledges the Coast Salish People on whose traditional territories we are privileged to live, work and play.
2.0 LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR
2.1 ATHLETIC TERMS

As per the *CP Style Guide*, team titles, even singular ones such as SFU Clan, take plural verbs.

**EXAMPLE:**
The SFU Clan played their first game.

The word team, however, is singular.

**EXAMPLE:**
The SFU Clan men’s football team was late for practice.

Always identify the Clan team on first reference.

**EXAMPLE:**
• The SFU Clan men’s basketball team
• Refer to the Clan, or the team, on second reference

When referencing sports games, capitalize the words associated with them.

**EXAMPLE:**
Game 7
2.2 CAPITALIZATION

A “down” style, meaning that capitals are used sparingly, is generally preferred when writing. In general, capitalize proper nouns—those belonging to a unique individual person, place, country or other entity.

**EXAMPLES:**
Vancouver, Adele, Saturn, Earth, the Everglades, the Queen, Queen Elizabeth II, the Pope, Pope Francis, Elvis, the Great Depression, Google, the Internet.

Capitalize the word “university” on its own when referring to SFU in a sentence.

**EXAMPLE:**
The University has a comprehensive sustainability policy.

Headlines and running text—only capitalize the first word and all proper nouns in headlines and running text. When in doubt, use lowercase.

Uppercase executive titles when they precede the name, but not after.

Lowercase people’s occupations, including academic titles, whether preceding or following their name.

**EXAMPLES:**
- During the lecture, professor John Smith fell asleep
- John Smith, professor of archaeology, fell asleep during the lecture

Formal titles, such as Mayor, Chief, Elder, Queen should be capitalized preceding the name, but not after.

**EXAMPLE:**
Mayor Dianne Watts; Dianne Watts, mayor of Surrey

Note: It is acceptable to capitalize such titles after the name on invitations, business cards and in promotional materials.

If the term for an individual member of an organization is the same as the proper name of the organization, capitalize the term.

**EXAMPLE:**
Rotarian, Liberal, Marine

Capitalize the formal names of buildings, places, faculties, departments, centres, schools and programs.

Use lowercase words for academic subjects, except when describing a subject that is also a culture, religion or language.

**EXAMPLE:**
- He is registering for a computing science course.
- Eva is taking a French course.

When referencing days, grade years, and sports games, capitalize the words associated with them.

**EXAMPLES:**
Grade 1, Game 7, Year 1

**ACADEMIC TITLES**

Use lowercase academic titles and descriptions, before or after the name. Do not include the ranks of associate or assistant professor, or senior lecturer/instructor. Do not use the title Dr., as not all professors have a PhD. If the professor is an adjunct, include that in the title. On second reference, use the last name only.

**EXAMPLES:**
- mathematics lecturer, Malgorzata Dubiel
- Charles Krieger, professor of biomedical physiology and kinesiology
- professor Jane Doe
- the professor
- postdoctoral fellow John Smith
- adjunct professor Louis Ng

**ACADEMIC ENDOWED TITLES**

Capitalize endowed professorships and fellowships, even when the title comes after a name. If it follows the name, it is preceded by a “the” or “SFU’s” to avoid confusion.

**EXAMPLES:**
- Tiffany Muller Myrdahl, the Junior Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair in Gender and Urban Studies
- David Baillie, a Canada Research Chair in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, came to SFU in 1974
- Shadbolt Fellow Stephen Collis
2.2 CAPITALIZATION CONTINUED

AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS
Capitalize the formal names of awards, scholarships, grants and distinctions.

EXAMPLES:
• Dean of Graduate Studies Award for Excellence
• Trudeau Foundation Doctoral Scholarship
• Rhodes Scholarship

DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES
Capitalize formal department and office names and the SFU Board of Governors; do not capitalize informal names and incomplete designations.

EXAMPLES:
• Department of History, the history department, the department
• The Office of Research Ethics, the research ethics office, the office
• The Simon Fraser University (SFU) Board of Governors, SFU’s board of governors
• The board of governors, the board

HOLIDAYS
Capitalize holidays, religious feasts and all other special days.

EXAMPLES:
April Fool’s Day, Canada Day, Halloween, Ramadan, Passover

TIME ZONES, SEASONS
Capitalize Pacific, Newfoundland and Atlantic, and time zones when spelled out. Lowercase eastern, mountain and central time zones.

EXAMPLES:
• Pacific standard time, eastern standard time
• But PST, PDT, MST, EDT, ADT

Lowercase the seasons: fall, spring, summer, winter


2.3 INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Think carefully about language involving age, race, sex, disabilities and religion. Use objectivity, sensitivity and taste when referring to personal appearance, nationality, age, colour, creed, sex, religion, sexual orientation and any other categories that could potentially insult people or groups.

SFU follows CP Style guidelines for inclusive language.

NAMES OF RACES, PEOPLES

Capitalize the proper names of races, tribes, nationalities and peoples.

**EXAMPLES:**
First Nations, Aboriginal Peoples, Aboriginal, Arab, Caucasian, Chinese, French-Canadian, Inuit, Jew, Latin, Asian, Cree, Southeast Asian, South Asian.

**EXAMPLES:**
• SFU has many French-Canadian students.
• First Nations students prepared for the course.
• There are seven Aboriginal students in the film production.
• The MBA draws attention to Aboriginal business.

Use uppercase for Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. That includes all Indian, Inuit and Métis people.

Use lowercase for variations such as indigenous people, native peoples. Check with the SFU Office for Aboriginal Peoples for current preferred spelling and usage.

Use the word Indian with discretion. Some people object to it while others, especially status Indians, prefer it.

Use native advisedly. Aboriginal and First Nations are more specific and are preferred by many in the community.

Where practical, use the actual name of the community—Tsleil-Waututh, Cree, Wet’suwet’en Mohawk—rather than a general term. Spell band names the way the band prefers, which is normally the spelling the Canadian government uses.

Inuit has replaced the outdated term “Eskimo.”

Note that “black” and “white” do not name races and are lowercase.

The term “black” is appropriate in all references in Canada and the United States. African-American is also used in the United States; in Canada, African-Canadian is used by some people but not by others.

Generally avoid descriptions such as “Polish-Canadian” or “Jamaican-Canadian,” which may put undue emphasis on the person’s ethnic background. These terms can be used if the individual prefers and/or they are relevant.

SEXISM

Avoid words and phrases that degrade, stereotype or ignore members of either sex, or needlessly highlight gender.

In general, neutralize the gender of occupations or titles that incorporate both sexes.

**EXAMPLES:**
• police officer • not policeman
• firefighter • not fireman
• business executive • not businessman
• chair • not chairman
• actor, whether male or female

Chinese refers to people of Chinese nationality, ancestry or one of numerous Chinese ethnicities.

Asian (East Asian) refers to residents and descendants of China, Japan, North and South Korea, and Taiwan.

South Asian refers to residents and descendants of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives. Do not use “East India”, “East Indian”.

Southeast Asian refers to residents and descendants of Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, The Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, East Timor, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam.

Note that “black” and “white” do not name races and are lowercase.
2.3 INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE CONTINUED

Where nouns include both genders, use the plural if possible to avoid the use of he (him, his) or she (her, hers).

Instead of Each student should see his or her supervisor, write: Students should see their supervisors.

Instead of A teacher needs to care about his or her student, write: Teachers need to care about their students.

Don’t use phrases such as “male secretary” or “lady lawyer,” which suggest that some professions or roles are primarily for men or women.

Beware of implying that men and women behave in stereotypical ways. For example, avoid writing that men are obsessed with sports or women love to shop.

The word “they” (them, their) is an increasingly suitable alternative to “he” (him, his) as a pronoun following a singular noun.

**EXAMPLE:**
Any student can attend as long as they register first.

**SEXUALITY**

As is the case with marital status, sexuality is only referenced when it is relevant to the story.

“Gay” is usually preferred as an alternative for homosexual men and is commonly used for women.

Use “sexual orientation” instead of “sexual preference.”

The terminology is still evolving for people in a same-sex relationships or marriages. Partner, husband and wife are acceptable terms.
2.4 MISCELLANEOUS

A, an

Use “a” before words or abbreviations/acronyms that start with a consonant sound.

EXAMPLES:
a Simon Fraser student, a historic event, a one-way flight, a union, a European, a 19th-century play

Use “an” before words that start with a vowel sound:

EXAMPLES:
an accident, an honours student, an 18th-century play, an SFU event, an MBA

Affect, effect

In most cases, use “affect” as a verb.

Use “effect” as noun except when you mean “to bring about.”

EXAMPLES:
• The Burnaby campus is not affected by the closure (verb)
• The closure affects the Surrey campus (verb)
• The closure could effect a change in class size (verb)
• The closure will have the same effect as increasing class sizes (noun)
• The effect of increasing class size is not well understood (noun)

But, And to start a sentence

This is acceptable, but shouldn’t be overdone.

Data—singular or plural?

Data can be singular or plural. It is plural in academic writing, but usually singular in other cases.

EXAMPLES:
• The data was persuasive
• They tabulate the data, which arrive from computers across campus

Less, fewer

Use fewer for things you can count.

EXAMPLE:
I have fewer classes than you do (you have five and I have four).

Use less for things you cannot count.

EXAMPLE:
I have less tolerance for cheating than you do.

Such, like

CP style calls for “such” in instances where it is to mean “as for example,” but the New York Times recommends “like” as it is less stilted, e.g., “Anyone else with an earned doctorate, like a PhD degree, may request …” The preference for SFU institutional communications and marketing is “such as” or “for example.”

That, which

Use “that” to introduce an essential clause—one that can’t be removed without changing the meaning.

EXAMPLE:
Go to the third house that has a blue door. (In this sentence, the house with the blue door is not necessarily the third house on the street.)

Use “which” to introduce a nonessential clause.

EXAMPLE:
Go to the third house, which has a blue door. (The “blue door” is additional information that could be removed without changing the meaning. In this sentence, the house with the blue door is, in fact, the third house on the street.)

Unlike essential clauses, nonessential clauses must be set off from the rest of a sentence by commas.

That, who

Use “that” when referring to animals or inanimate objects.

Use “who” when referring to people.

EXAMPLE:
• Bob is the one who rescued the dog from the river
2.5 PUNCTUATION USE OF @ SYMBOL

EMAIL

Avoid using the @ symbol or sign, also known as the “at sign,” except in email addresses—to separate the user’s name from their domain name—and in some social media applications.

**Example:**
• jane_doe@sfu.ca

TWITTER

The @ symbol in Twitter is combined with a person or organization’s username and is included in tweets to tag the user or send them a message. When the @ is before a username, it is automatically linked to the user’s profile page.

**Example:**
• @SFUBeedie student @JaneDoe named HSBC Woman Leader of Tomorrow at the @enactus_canada national competition

TEXT

The @ symbol was originally used as an abbreviation for “at the rate of” in accounting. But it is increasingly misused as shorthand for “at” in sentences.

Good: 10 tickets @ $3.50 = $35

Bad: The students will meet @ the gym @ 5 p.m.

AMPERSAND

Use only for business and other entities that include it as part of the formal name (SFU’s Communications & Marketing, AT&T, Grand & Toy). Do not use an ampersand instead of “and” except in graphs, charts and printed figures or text arranged in columns on a page. (In select marketing materials, the ampersand can sometimes be used as a graphic element.)

APOSTROPHE

For regular nouns that do not end in s, the general rule is to add an ’s to the singular to denote possession and an apostrophe only after the s to the plural.

**Examples:**
• the dog’s tail (singular)
• the dogs’ tails (plural)

For singular common nouns ending in s or z, add an ’s except when the next word begins with s.

**Examples:**
• the campus’s bus stop (plural: campuses’ bus stops)
• the campus’ stadium (plural: campuses’ stadiums)

For proper nouns ending in an s follow CP Style and add only an apostrophe to the plural form.

**Examples:**
• Zeballos’ history
• Socrates’ plays
• Martinez’s family is coming
• the Martinezes’ house is small
• Lewis’ house is brown
• the Lewises’ and the Martinezes’ houses are old
• Gulf Islands’ representative
• Gulf Islands’ structures

Singular proper names ending in x or z: Add an ’s

**Examples:**
• Comox’s airport
• Agassiz’s population

Most possessive pronouns do not use apostrophes.

**Use:**
• hers • not her’s
• its • not it’s
• theirs • not their’s or theirs’
2.5 PUNCTUATION CONTINUED

Plurals of letters and numbers: For nouns formed from single or multiple capital letters and single or multiple numbers form the plural by adding s alone (the 1960s, IUDs, MBAs). The plural of single lowercase letters is formed with an apostrophe and s (watch your p’s and q’s).

BULLETED AND NUMBERED LISTS

Lists can begin with capitals and end with periods, or not, as long as you are consistent throughout the body of your text. Keep the elements in a vertical list parallel. If you don’t have a verb in the introductory phrase, you should have one beginning each of the listed elements.

**EXAMPLE:**
Vertical lists let you:
• Show a set of terms, choices or statements clearly
• Avert reader fatigue or confusion from a long list in a sentence
• Escape repetition by using one opening phrase with several clause items

If your lead-in statement is a whole sentence, use a colon at the end of the sentence to introduce the list. The items can also be listed as sentences.

**EXAMPLE:**
SFU supports the local economy in at least three major ways:
• It spends millions of dollars on goods and services in the community
• It employs almost 6,000 people
• It pays millions in taxes to local governments

BRACKETS (PARENTHESES)

Use brackets (parentheses):
• to include material that you want to de-emphasize but include nevertheless
• when other punctuation won’t do the job
• to enclose a nickname within a name
• to number or letter a series within a sentence
• to enclose political or other affiliations
• to enclose equivalents and translations

**EXAMPLES:**
• SFU President Andrew Petter was dean of the University of Victoria’s law faculty from 2001–08 (the first year as acting dean).
• The Moose Jaw (Sask.) Times-Herald
• William ("Bible Bill") Aberhart
• The union pressed for (a) more pay, (b) a shorter work week and (c) better pensions
• Senator Nancy Greene Raine (PC—B.C.)
• “We can expect two more inches (five centimetres) of rain”

COMMAS

Omit the last comma before “and”—known as the serial (or Oxford) comma—in a list of three or more items.

**EXAMPLE:**
• Students must take history, economics and English.

But use the last comma in a series of items if it prevents confusion.

**EXAMPLE:**
• I dedicate this book to my parents, Alice, and God.

DASHES

Although they are frequently overused, en and em dashes have numerous applications. Common word processing software applications apply a space before and after an em dash.

**EN DASH**
An en dash is about the width of an N, slightly longer than a hyphen. It is normally used in place of the word “to” when indicating a date, time or number range. It can also be used to combine open compounds.

**EXAMPLES:**
• 8 a.m.–5:30 p.m., February–March, B.C.–Alberta border,
• high school–university conference

**EM DASH**
An em dash is the width of an M. Em dashes can replace commas, semicolons, colons and brackets to indicate additional emphasis, a break or a sudden change of thought. Use without spaces surrounding it.

**EXAMPLES:**
• SFU’s Aboriginal EMBA—Canada’s first—is an example of how SFU is engaging Aboriginal communities
• She takes three courses—English, math and chemistry
2.5 PUNCTUATION CONTINUED

HYPHENATION

Hyphens are commonly used to join compound modifiers—two or more words serving as a single adjective modifying a noun—to avoid ambiguity.

**EXAMPLE:**
used-car dealer, small-business tax, big-car lover

Don’t use a hyphen with compound modifiers when the meaning is clear because of common usage.

**EXAMPLE:**
acid rain threat, sales tax increase, savings bank deposit

Don’t use a hyphen with adverbs ending in -ly. The -ly alerts readers that the next word is being modified.

**EXAMPLE:**
brightly coloured room, eagerly awaited speech

**USE HYPHENS:**
• to indicate joint titles and conflicting or repetitive elements
• to avoid doubling a vowel, tripling a consonant or duplicating a prefix
• with ex-, self-, all-, post- and -elect
• Exception: postgraduate, postdoctoral

**EXAMPLES:**
• secretary-treasurer, writer-editor
• re-emerge, anti-intellectual, doll-like
• ex-husband, self-contained, all-American, president-elect

QUOTATION MARKS

In most cases, use double quotation marks except for headlines and quotes within a quote. All punctuation marks except colons and semicolons are positioned within quotation marks. Exception: when the last word in a sentence appears in quotation marks, the punctuation falls outside. Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations, indicate words used ironically and highlight unfamiliar terms on first reference.

**EXAMPLES:**
• “It wasn’t the players’ fault,” said the coach, of the “friendly” soccer game that ended with two players being “red carded” in the last half
• “These red cards seemed like the referee’s attempt to make up for his own shortcomings. It was like he was thinking ‘I’ll get you two for the penalties I missed in the first half’.”

Do not use quotation marks to enclose titles of compositions, sayings or headlines or to format question-and-answer text.

**USE QUOTATION MARKS FOR:**
• Titles of academic papers, short poems, articles, individual chapters and short stories
• Symposium and conference lectures and paper titles
• Dissertation and thesis titles
• Title given to a conference, e.g., “The State of Canadian Education”
• The complete official name of a conference, such as the annual Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada meeting, is simply capitalized, with no italics or quotation marks. (The words “meeting” and “annual” aren’t capitalized because they aren’t part of the title)
• Songs, other short musical compositions, radio and television shows (or single episodes of continuing series)
2.5 PUNCTUATION CONTINUED

SEMICOLONS AND COLONS

Colons

The colon is used to mark a break in grammatical construction to explain, expand, enumerate or elaborate. It emphasizes the content relation between the separated elements.

The colon is commonly used to introduce a series or list. Lowercase the first word after a colon in a sentence unless that word is the start of a complete sentence or quotation or is a proper noun.

A colon should not separate the main elements of a sentence—such as a verb and its direct object—even if that object is a vertical list.

Use colons in question-and-answer formats and for interviews. Do not use quotation marks.

EXAMPLE:
• Q: Why are you enrolling at SFU?
  A: Because it is Canada’s engage university.

Semicolons

Semicolons mark a more important break in the sentence than commas. They:
• separate two parts of a compound sentence that are related but not connected by conjunctions such as “and,” “but” or “for”
• separate items in a series that are long and complicated or entail internal punctuation

EXAMPLE:
SFU invited presidents from several universities: Peter MacKinnon, University of Saskatchewan; Mamdouh Shoukri, York University; John McKendry, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; and David Turpin, University of Victoria.

To determine if a semicolon is suitable in a compound sentence, try substituting a period in its place and see if each part can stand alone, with a verb and subject:

EXAMPLE:
We were running late; the plane was due in 20 minutes.
3.0 GENERAL USAGE
3.1 FORMS OF ADDRESS

COURTESY TITLES

For professional and academic titles, do not use Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs. or Ms. to preface a name. Use the first name and last name in first reference and the last name in subsequent references.

EXAMPLE:
• I met John Anderson, professor of criminology, for the first time last month.
• Anderson is an expert in crime scene analysis.

Do not use “Dr.” when referring to professors, as not all professors hold PhDs. “Dr.” should only refer to a health professional such as a physician or dentist.

Capitalize endowed professorships and fellowships, even when the title comes after a name. If it follows the name, it is preceded by a “the” or “SFU’s” to avoid confusion.

Use the first and last name to differentiate between two people with the same last name such as married couples and siblings. If someone’s gender is not clear on first reference, use his or her (he or she) in later references to indicate gender.
3.2 ITALICS

USE ITALICS FOR

Book titles, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, movie titles, record albums
Foreign words that are not familiar (if it's in a standard dictionary it doesn't take italics.)
Songs and TV shows are not italicized; they are set off with quotation marks.

EXAMPLES:

• The research will be published this week in the international journal *Science*.
• The Wet’Suwet’en word *sanikwa* refers to the transformation of insects.
3.3 NUMBERS

In general, spell out whole numbers from one through nine and use numerals (figures) for numbers 10 and above. Exceptions: game scores, course credits, GPAs, school grades, room numbers, book chapters, building numbers. Spell out fractions standing alone and use symbols for fractions with whole numbers.

**EXAMPLES:**
- The rabbit ate three pounds of lettuce and 25 carrots.
- He spent one-tenth of his income on clothes.
- That is 2 ½ times more than last year.
- Three-quarters of the money went to buy shoes.

Avoid starting a sentence with a number, but if you must, don’t use a numeral.

**EXAMPLES:**
- Eighteen out of 30 students received scholarships.
- Nineteen sixty-five marked SFU’s first term.
- SFU began its first term in 1965.

You might have to rewrite some sentences: “Fans bought 300,000 albums in the first week” instead of “300,000 albums were sold in the first week.”

**DATES, TIME**

Write out months and days of the week in full. For months used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

**EXAMPLES:**
- The ceremony is on Thursday, Aug. 12, 2014.
- She is graduating in June 2014.

For time, use periods “a.m.” and “p.m.” When referring to the time at the top of the clock, do not include the zeroes.

**EXAMPLES:**
- 7 a.m., 7:30 p.m., midnight, noon

**MEASUREMENTS**

CP style does not specify use of metric or imperial measurements. For SFU publications, measurements may be given in either or both. Check the *CP Style Guide* for correct abbreviations.

**PER CENT**

Spell out the word “per cent.” Do not use the symbol % except in tables, graphics and charts.

**EXAMPLES:**
- Less than five per cent of the students attended the lecture
- Student participation increased by 20 per cent

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Preferred: 604-555-1212
Acceptable: (604) 555-1212, 604.555.1212
Unacceptable: 604/555/1212, 604/555-1212
3.4 THE WEB

EMAIL AND WEB ADDRESSES

Include the “www” when referencing SFU’s Web address. Older browsers will not recognize the address without it.

Before deciding whether to include “http://,” “https://” and/or “www.” in Web addresses, test the URLs to make sure they work without these prefixes. If possible, omit the “http://” or “https://” from Web addresses that include the www.

Do not underline or italicize email or Web addresses.

When a Web address comes at the end of a sentence, finish it with a period. If it is online, make sure the period is not part of the hyperlink, i.e. the period is outside of the closing </a> tag or the link will not work.

URLs should be lowercase if they are not case sensitive.

HYPERLINKS

Keep email or Web address URL hyperlinks in one piece. Don’t insert hyphens to reflect a line break, as the link will not work.

Write the shortest URL address possible that will still work when you type it in a Web browser.

Shorten long URLs using a URL shortener such as at.sfu.ca, get.sfu.ca, i.sfu.ca and owl.ly, especially for social media such as Twitter that severely limit characters per message.

Do not use phrases such as “click here” to indicate a hyperlink. The text should make sense without the hyperlinks.

Do not include “http://” in Web addresses unless the address does not begin with “www,” in which case you may need to include “http://”.

Always test your links to make sure they work before including them in a document.
3.5 BYLINES/FORMATS FOR PRINT AND ONLINE

If the article or column is written by a staff writer or regular contributor and his or her name is already listed somewhere in the print publication, such as the masthead, include only the name.

**EXAMPLE:**
By Jake Woods

If the piece is written by someone other than a staff writer or regular contributor and requires a byline, include information about the author at the end of the article.

**EXAMPLE:**
By Louise Chan (under headline)

At the end of the article, write the following in italics:
Louise Chan is a third-year sociology student at Simon Fraser University.

In the case of *aq* magazine or specialty publications, a byline for an alumnus is to include the program and year of graduation.

**EXAMPLE:**
By Preeya Singh, computing science, '89

Web articles that include a byline should identify the author.

**EXAMPLE (FOR STAFF MEMBERS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS):**
By Angelo Van Nuys, staff writer (under the headline)

**EXAMPLE (FOR NON-STAFF):**
By Sophie Smith (under the headline)

At the end of the article, write the following in italics:
Sophie Smith is a Vancouver freelance writer.

In all cases where a second writer has provided supplementary files for the story, the writer may be acknowledged at the end of the story in italics.

**EXAMPLE:**
With files from Bruce Harper
3.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

SFU has a policy (see www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/information/I10-10.html) that upholds confidentiality of students. In the case of current students, we can neither confirm nor deny that they are students attending SFU. Students who have graduated are part of public record and can be identified as SFU graduates (as per section 22 (4) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act). In cases where a person attended but did not graduate or did not attend at all, we simply state that the University has no record of this individual graduating from SFU.

EXAMPLES:
- We cannot confirm or deny that Reginald Johnston is attending SFU
- Rhonda Smith graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in 1999
- We have no record of Georgia Brown graduating from SFU
### 3.7 COPYRIGHT

In general, copyrights in all Simon Fraser University publications should list the university as the owner regardless of the university department, program, centre, institute or other entity producing the publication.

The copyright should indicate a © followed by the year and the official name of the university.

**EXAMPLE:**
© 2013 Simon Fraser University.

#### EXCEPTIONS

The only exceptions are:
- Scholarly works including research information and teaching materials created and owned by SFU faculty and non-faculty staff
- Works created by undergraduate students during their course of study
- Works including theses created by graduate students—unless a research contract in support of the student’s work stipulates otherwise

#### SFU COPYRIGHT WEBSITE

Refer to SFU’s copyright website at www.lib.sfu.ca/copyright for further information including:
- Information on Canada’s copyright law and SFU’s copyright policies and procedures
- How fair dealing applies to copying materials
- How copyright materials may be used for an educational purpose, whether in the classroom or online
- What you can legally reproduce for your own research and private study purposes

If you still have questions, contact SFU’s Copyright Office at copy@sfu.ca.