Introduction

The Wentworth Institute of Technology Writing Style Guide includes information not only on style rules particular to Wentworth, but also commonly confused rules. Writing and editing with a consistent editorial style ensures integrity and coherence among our written communication materials, which strengthens Wentworth’s message and brand.

This guide should not serve as an all-inclusive reference tool. It is meant to be used in conjunction with reference books including a high-quality dictionary and the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook.

If you have any questions, please contact Caleb Cochran, executive director of communications, at (617) 989-4076 or cochranc@wit.edu.
Wentworth-Specific Rules

Communicating the School’s Name
Use the full name of the school when it is referenced for the first time. Always refer to the school as “Wentworth” when not using the full name of “Wentworth Institute of Technology.”

Capitalize the “Institute” when it is used by itself.

Do not write “The Wentworth Institute of Technology,” “Wentworth Institute,” or “the Wentworth Institute.” Refrain from using “WIT,” except for internal purposes or when communicating with audiences familiar with the acronym, such as current students or alumni, as appropriate.

The President
On first reference to the current president, write “President Zorica Pantić.” For all other references in a formal document, write “President Pantić.”

Titles of Colleges, Departments, Offices, and Programs
Official college names:

College of Architecture, Design, and Construction Management
Departments within this college:
Architecture
Construction Management
Industrial Design
Interior Design

College of Arts and Sciences
Departments within this college:
Applied Mathematics
Business Management and Facility Management
Humanities and Social Sciences
Sciences

College of Engineering and Technology
Departments within this college:
Biomedical Engineering
Civil Engineering and Technology
Computer Science and Networking
Electrical Engineering and Technology
Mechanical Engineering and Technology
Interdisciplinary Engineering

College of Professional and Continuing Education
Capitalize offices and departments only when referring to their official names.
Correct: Bill Smith is a faculty member in the Department of Architecture.
Incorrect: His office is in the Architecture Department.

Never capitalize the word program.
Correct: Construction Management program
Academic subjects are not capitalized unless they are part of a department name or an official course name, program name, or unless they are proper names.
Correct: She teaches a course on architecture.
Correct: He is taking an English course.
Correct: He is majoring in Construction Management.
Correct: He is working toward a degree in electrical engineering.

Official names of courses are capitalized, except when used as adjectives.
Correct: I am signing up for Survey of Architecture I.

Douglas D. Schumann Library & Learning Commons
The full title of the Wentworth library is The Douglas D. Schumann Library & Learning Commons. Please note the use of the ampersand. Use the full name of the library upon first reference.

Email Signature Standards
All external email signatures should use the following format. Email signatures should be in Calibri font, 11 pt. type size. This is a standard font on both PCs and Macs and works for all email clients. Some non-standard fonts may not translate across email clients.

A line the length of “Wentworth Institute of Technology” may be added above the name to separate the signature from the body of the email.

Name (in bold)
Title
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Phone number
E-mail address
www.wit.edu

For example:

John Smith
Director of Publications
Wentworth Institute of Technology
(617) 989-xxxx
smithj@wit.edu
www.wit.edu

Some guidelines for email signatures:

• Please refrain from adding personal messages, quotations, etc. in your email signatures.

• Adding links to social media channels is optional; feel free to promote the main accounts on Facebook and Twitter or your own office, division, or center's accounts. Remember that using links is preferable to images or
• Avoid images, logos and vCards. Most email clients process these as attachments or block them by default. So, if you include these in your signature, your email recipients won’t know when you send a real attachment and when it’s just your email signature. *This includes the Wentworth logo and logos for social media platforms. They should not be included in a signature.*

**Titles of Leaders**

**General rules**

Capitalize formal titles directly before an individual’s name. Do not capitalize titles after a name.

*Correct:* Director of Communication Jane Doe has been at Wentworth for six months.

*Incorrect:* I spoke to president Zorica Pantić.

Use lowercase letters and spell out titles when used after a name.

*Correct:* Jane Doe, vice president for Institutional Advancement, believes Wentworth alumni are engaged in the school.

*Incorrect:* Jane Doe, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, says that Wentworth students are one-of-a-kind.

Use lowercase letters when writing a generic title.

*Correct:* She is the president of Wentworth.

*Incorrect:* He is Chairman of the committee.

**Administrative titles**

For all VP and AVP positions, spell out “vice president” or assistant/associate vice president and use “for” after the VP/AVP title before listing the business unit:

*Correct:* John Smith, vice president for Business and Finance

*Correct:* Jane Doe, vice president for Institutional Advancement

For Directors/Assistant Directors use “of.”

*Correct:* John Doe, director of public affairs

**Faculty titles**

Include complete faculty academic titles before the name when appropriate. Use discretion as to whether titledisrupts the flow of an article.

*Correct:* Assistant Professor Andrew Johnston

Faculty academic titles are lowercase after the name separated by a comma.

*Correct:* Andrew Johnston, assistant professor of architecture.

**Company names**

Check the company website to see how the company’s name is written.


*Correct:* Mr. Brown works at Acme, Inc. during the week.

**Academic Credentials**

**Academic degrees**

Use periods (B.S., B.A., Ph.D. etc.). Generic academic degrees are lowercase and possessive: bachelor’s degree, master’s degree. There is no possessive for an associate degree.

*Correct:* His bachelor’s degree gave him an edge when applying for jobs.
Correct: She received a B.S. in computer science. He has an associate degree in interior design.

**Specific academic degrees**
Capitalize. Note that the word “degree” is never part of the official name of a degree.

Correct: Bachelor of Engineering
Correct: He has a Master of Architecture.
Incorrect: Bachelor of Engineering Degree

**Referencing Our Alumni**
Singular male: alumnus
Singular female: alumna
Two or more people (including a male): alumni
Two or more women: alumnæ
Write the name of the alumnus or alumna, followed by comma, program classification, followed by an apostrophe and the last two digits of the graduation year, then end with another comma.

Correct: John Doe, BAET ’02, now owns a construction company.
When an alumnus or alumna has more than one degree, separate the degrees by a comma.
Correct: John Doe, BAET ’02, BAET ’04, has a job at a construction company.

**Class**
The word “Class” is capitalized only when it refers to a specific class:
Correct: The Class of 1959 enjoyed their Black and Gold weekend.
Correct: Our Class enjoyed our 30th Reunion.

**General Grammar Rules**

**Capitalization**
When in doubt, do not capitalize.
Do not capitalize:
- The words ‘department,’ ‘center,’ ‘office,’ when they appear alone.
- Classes of students (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)
Seasons for the year, unless they are used as part of a formal name (the Wentworth Winter Carnival) or refer to a specific year (Fall 1993).

Correct: They visited each spring. Correct: She took classes during the fall semester.

Do capitalize:
- ‘Institute’ when it refers to Wentworth, even if used alone.
- Words such as the following when they are used as part of a title: ‘association,’ ‘building,’ ‘room,’ ‘center,’ ‘council,’ ‘conference,’ ‘office.’ Thereafter do not capitalize these words when they are used alone to refer to that specific place or group.
Correct: The Wentworth Board of Trustees voted to adjourn the meeting.
Correct: She is a new member of the board of trustees.
- The words ‘room’ and ‘building’ when used to designate a specific area:  
  Correct: The class was held in Room 205 in Building 22.

- The word ‘class’ when it refers to a specific one.  
  Correct: The Class of 1959.

- The season, when it refers to a specific one.  

- The words ‘commencement’ or ‘ceremony’ when it refers to a specific event.  
  Correct: Peter Campot spoke at the May 2009 Commencement.  
  The Wentworth Alumni Association was recognized at the 2009 Reunion.  
  It is always fun to renew old friendships at school reunions.

- Proper names of all races and nationalities, but not for generic terms like black and white.  

- Regions of the country, but not directions or points on a compass.  
  Correct: The cold front is moving East. It hit the West Coast last week. (Note: In this example, it is the region “East” that is being referenced, not the direction, hence the use of capitals.)

**Dates**  
Spell out the full name of the month. Avoid use of “th,” “nd,” “rd,” and “st” when referencing a specific date.  
Correct: The conference was held on June 1, 2000.

Spell out months if not day or year is used.  
Correct: He was hired in August.

If just the month and the year are referenced, do not use a comma.  
Correct: The conference is being held in October 2010.  
Incorrect: The school year starts in September, 2009.

**Years**  
Always use four digits when indicating a span of years:  
Correct: 1986-1989

In sentences that contain the full date (month, day, and year) a comma should precede and follow the year.  
Correct: The registration deadline is April 1, 2010, and cannot be changed.

Do not place a comma between the month and the year when the day is not mentioned:  
Correct: July 2010.

When referring to decades use the 1920s or the ‘20s.

**Time of Day**  
Time of day should be written: 1:00 p.m., 2:30 a.m.  
When writing a range of time, include “a.m.” or “p.m.” at the end of the sequence unless the range of time includes both “a.m.” and “p.m.” Insert a space before and after the dash:  
Correct: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Correct: 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Common Terms
Most compound adjectives are NOT hyphenated. When in doubt, check The Associated Press Stylebook. Here is a list of common words with correct hyphenation:
- advisor (spelled with “or” not “er”)
- cooperative education (co-op) program (On second reference, use co-op.)
- hands-on
- high tech
- high-tech gadget
- online
- startup
- website
- World Wide Web
- worldwide

Punctuation

General Rules
In all text (with the exception of press releases) use only one space at the end of a sentence. Avoid unnecessary use of bold, ALL CAPS, italic, and underline. Avoid using the ampersand (&)—if you do use it, be consistent throughout. Abbreviate the United States of America as U.S. Do not use the word ‘etc.’ in formal copy. Place periods and/or commas within quotation marks. Correct: “I enjoyed my co-op experience,” she said. Place colons and semi colons outside of quotation marks. Correct: There were two main themes of the workshop on “Managing the Manager”: communication and information sharing. Use an apostrophe in the word ‘it’s’ only when it is used as a contraction of ‘it is,’ not when it is the possessive adjective. Correct: It’s clear that Wentworth alumni love their alma mater.

Serial Comma
Employ the serial comma when listing three or more things and include a comma before “and.” Correct: His interests include architecture, interior design, and civil engineering.

Numerals
Spell out zero through nine, except when a number begins a sentence, in which case always write out the number. Exceptions to the rule:
1. When a number is the first word of a sentence, it is ALWAYS spelled.
2. When the number is part of a percentage. See “Percentages” below.

Percentages
Use the rules above regarding numbers, but always spell out the word percent except when it appears in charts, graphs, advertisements, or financial-related documents.
Correct: She gave 100 percent.
Correct: Responses to the alumni survey was 53%.

Money
Always use the “$” sign rather than writing the word dollars.
Correct: She won $100,000.
Incorrect: He gave $2 million dollars.
List the whole dollar amounts without cents.
Correct: $1 or $25
Incorrect: $1.00 or $25.00

Referencing Titles (Conferences, Publications, Faculty Lectures, etc.)

Conferences
Conferences are capitalized, while conference titles/themes are in italics.
Correct: The American Marketing Association’s 2008 Conference, Marketing to the Next Generation, was well attended.

Publications
Italicize the name of books, faculty lectures, newspapers, magazines, journals, and similar publications.
Correct: To Kill a Mockingbird
Correct: The Chronicle of Higher Education
Correct: The New York Times
Correct: Is Technology a Benefit or a Distraction in the Classroom?

Television and Radio
Television shows and radio programs are in italics, with episode titles in quotations marks.
Correct: I enjoyed the Everybody Loves Raymond episode, “That Crazy Cat.”