



**WENTWORTH**  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

# **Writing Style Guide**

Updated August 2017

## Introduction

The Wentworth Institute of Technology Writing Style Guide includes information on style rules particular to Wentworth, as well as 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 such as *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, and *The Associated Press Stylebook*, which serves as Wentworth's house style guide for anything not covered here.

If you have any questions, please contact Caleb Cochran, executive director of communications, at 617-989-4076 or [cochranc@wit.edu](mailto:cochranc@wit.edu).

# Wentworth-Specific Rules

## Communicating the School's Name

Use the full name of the university when it is referenced for the first time: **Wentworth Institute of Technology**. 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** use any of the following:

- “The Wentworth Institute of Technology”
- “Wentworth Institute”
- “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.

On second reference, you may use “the Institute” or “the university” to describe Wentworth.

**Please note:** When Wentworth was officially recognized as a university by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education in July 2017, the name of the school did not change, and there are no plans to change the name.

## 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  
Management  
Humanities and Social Sciences  
Sciences

### College of Engineering and Technology

*Departments within this college:*

Biomedical Engineering  
Civil Engineering and Technology

Computer Science and Computer Networking  
Electrical Engineering and Technology  
Interdisciplinary Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering and Technology

## 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.

## 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.

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### Name (in bold)

Title

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Phone number

Email address

[www.wit.edu](http://www.wit.edu)

For example:

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### John Smith

Director of Publications

Wentworth Institute of Technology

617-989-xxxx

[smithj@wit.edu](mailto:smithj@wit.edu)

[www.wit.edu](http://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. Use links rather than images or logos.
- 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 Communications 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 unique.

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 title disrupts 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.

Do not use a comma after company abbreviations: "Inc." "Co." "Corp." "Ltd."

*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: *alumnae*

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 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.

**Capitalize** the following:

- '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.

*Correct:* Spring 1992.

- 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.

*Correct:* Australian, Irish, Hispanic, African-American.

- 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

internet

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 semicolons 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.

Avoid use of “th,” “nd,” “rd,” and “st” when referencing numbers.

*Correct:* There were 15 men on the boat.

*Correct:* Fifteen men got ready to go sailing.

*Correct:* Wentworth came tenth in the road race.

## 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.

## 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

## Titles

### 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.”

## Frequently Asked Questions About Wentworth’s University Status

**Q.** Is the name of the Institute going to change?

**A. NO.** There will be no name change. Wentworth Institute of Technology is a name that is known, and it is a name that will stay.

**Q.** Will Wentworth Institute of Technology be referred to as a “university” in the generic sense?

**A.** It can be, **YES.** On second reference and in other instances where we refer to Wentworth Institute of Technology in writing, it will be appropriate to use “the university,” or “the Institute” or just “Wentworth.” However, we should never say, “Wentworth University.”

**Q.** Is the Institute’s brand identity changing?

**A. NO.** Wentworth’s core brand identity will not change. Wentworth will still be depicted in the context of the “Five Factors of Career Success,” and the look and feel of the brand will not change. Messaging may shift

slightly to emphasize the expansion of our graduate programs.

**Q.** Will Wentworth's small-campus feel change?

**A. NO.** Wentworth values its small college environment, which will continue. Wentworth will remain the same place. Its comfortable, intimate learning environment will be preserved.

**Q.** Does this new status mean that the school's mission or vision is changing?

**A. NO.** Its mission remains the same: To empower, inspire, and innovate through experiential learning. We are moving toward our vision to become nationally recognized as the university of choice for externally collaborative, project-based, interdisciplinary culture for learning (EPIC).

**Q.** Does this mean that we are becoming a research university?

**A. NO.** Wentworth will remain focused on teaching, applied research, and students' career preparation.

**Q.** Why should Wentworth become a university?

**A.** This new designation will help to raise our national visibility and recognition. When it established "sound" graduate programs and began offering master's degrees in four distinct disciplines, Wentworth met the requirements to apply to the state of Massachusetts for university status. By obtaining that status, Wentworth joins a list of prestigious universities in the Greater Boston area and around the country.

**Q.** How did the university designation happen?

**A.** Wentworth became eligible when it added master's degree programs in applied computer science, architecture, civil engineering, construction management, facility management, and technology management. To obtain the "university" designation, Wentworth had to apply to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.

**Q.** If I am an alum of Wentworth Institute of Technology, will anything change for me because of the Institute's earning university status?

**A. YES.** The value of your degree will be enhanced. Wentworth's added educational offerings will allow you to engage with the Institute throughout your career.

**Please note:** For questions about any style guideline not covered in this guide, please refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook*.