

Elms College Editorial Style Guide for Marketing and Promotional Materials

The Office of Marketing seeks to increase recognition of the College of Our Lady of the Elms by establishing and ensuring adherence to a strategic graphic identity program; producing high-quality, cost-effective publications; and working collaboratively with internal and external clients to produce the most appropriate communications to the college's various constituents.

Marketing produces a range of printed and web-based materials that present Elms College in an attractive, clear, and visually consistent manner. In addition to managing communications to external audiences, we also can provide editorial, design, and production services for college departments and programs that need our assistance.

All publications, publicity, and advertising for Elms College are generated or approved by the Office of Marketing. Press releases must be written and distributed by Marketing in accordance with editorial style guidelines and established journalistic standards. This policy has been established to enable a comprehensive marketing program and to project a unified image of Elms College in the best interests of the institution as a whole, while also meeting the needs of individual programs.

To submit any requests for photos, logos, publications, advertising, press releases, website updates, or any other materials, please fill out the form at <https://www.elms.edu/marketing-request-form/>

Below you will find some rules and guidelines about the college's editorial style. Please consult the Graphic Standards for information on logos, the college's official colors, official fonts, trademarks, the college seal, and other visual identity standards.

Editorial Style

All Elms College promotional materials must follow Associated Press style, as outlined in the AP Style Guide, and established Elms College style rules.

Associated Press style has very specific rules for abbreviations and acronyms, addresses, dates, ages and other numbers, units of measure, names and personal/professional titles, times of day, technological terms, punctuation, capitalization of proper nouns, and more.

When spelling of a word or phrase is uncertain, and AP Style does not stipulate a spelling, we refer to Merriam-Webster's dictionary and use the established spelling there.

The Office of Marketing is staffed by experienced editors and writers who are highly familiar with AP Style. We carefully proof each promotional item that leaves campus to ensure that it adheres to our graphic and editorial standards.

Elms-Specific Spellings, Special Style Rules, & Writing Guidelines

Alumnae Library - Not “Alumni Library.” (Also, this is pronounced *alum-NEE*, not *alum-NIGH* or *alum-NAY*.)

Berchmans - Do not add an apostrophe between the “n” and the “s.” (Also, this is pronounced *BERK-mans*, not *BIRCH-mans*.)

Blazers - Our athletic teams are Blazers. No apostrophe. The “s” can be removed in certain contexts, such as *The Blazer women’s basketball team won 24-3 Saturday ...*

caRe vaN - Do not capitalize the “c” in caRe vaN unless it appears at the start of a sentence. (And, if it does appear at the start of a sentence, rewrite so that it doesn’t.)

Center for Student Success - Not “Student Success Center.”

college - Capitalize “college” when used in “Elms College,” “the College of Our Lady of the Elms,” and “College of Our Lady of the Elms.” (Note: NEVER say Our Lady of the Elms College) On its own, “college” is not a proper noun, so when using “college” or “the college” as a generic term, it is grammatically incorrect to capitalize “college.” Example: *The College of Our Lady of the Elms enjoys a small, close-knit community; the college’s faculty and staff strive to foster a sense of closeness and family among students.*

- See **proper nouns**.

commas - We use serial (or “Oxford”) commas. Example: *Students, alumni, and faculty alike delighted in the snow-day announcement.*

Do not forget the commas at the end of subordinate clauses such as titles, degrees, descriptive phrases, states following cities, and the like. Examples: *John Smith, Ph.D., of Wallingford, CT, a computer science professor, opposed the motion.* (That’s three end commas: one after “Ph.D.,” one after “CT,” and one after “professor.”)

concision - AP Style prohibits overly wordy, “flowery” prose that can read as confusing, stilted, or embarrassingly stuffy (so does every other style guide worth its salt). The Office of Marketing can collaborate with you to create clear, concise text that says what you need it to say with the greatest possible effectiveness and most appropriate tone.

dates - When listing the date and time for an event, the correct order is “time, day, place.” There is no need for the preposition “on” between the time and the day. Example: *The lecture will be held at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 24, in the Alumnae Library Theater.*

degrees (spelling, punctuation, abbreviations, and usage)

- bachelor’s degree / master’s degree - Apostrophes always necessary. They come before the “s,” not after.
- bachelor of science (B.S.) degree / bachelor of arts (B.A.) degree / master of science (M.S.) degree / master of arts (M.A.) degree / master of arts in teaching (MAT) / master of arts in applied theology (MAAT) degree / master of science in nursing (MSN) degree / doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree
- See **proper nouns**.

first reference - In press releases, we must refer to the college as “the College of Our Lady of the Elms” on first reference; after that, “Elms College.”

Maguire Center - Lowercase “g.” No “c.”

ordinal numbers - Per AP Style, we do not use ordinal numbers in dates -- there is no need to write “Oct. 3rd” when “Oct. 3” is pronounced exactly the same.

professional titles

Associated Press style stipulates that professional titles (including dean, professor, lecturer, and the like) are only to be capitalized when used BEFORE a name. When the title follows the person’s name as a subordinate clause, set off by commas, then it is not to be capitalized.

Example: *Harry E. Dumay, Ph.D., MBA, president of Elms College, thanked School of Nursing Dean Kathleen Scoble, Ed.D., for her hard work on the collaborative project.*

- See **proper nouns**.

proper nouns

Please note that degrees and majors/fields are not proper nouns (except for concentrations containing proper nouns such as *Asian studies* or *Asperger’s studies*). They are not personal names, company names, building names, language names, country names, place names, or school names, for example. They are not to be capitalized. Therefore, the only word that should be capitalized in a sentence such as *I came to this college to earn my master of science degree in economics* would be the first-person pronoun that begins the sentence.

- This goes for generic terms for things related to the college: campus, students, alumni, college. They should not be capitalized unless they are part of proper noun phrases such as *Elms College* or *Office of Alumni Relations*.
- Names of specific programs, however, are proper nouns and should be capitalized, as in the following example: *The Doctor of Nursing Practice Program welcomes applicants to visit our vibrant campus.*
- See **degrees (spelling, punctuation, abbreviations, and usage)**.
- See **college**.
- See **professional titles**.

Rose William Hall - Never “Rose Williams Hall” or “Rose Williams.”

Sisters of St. Joseph - Do not spell out “Saint” in this case. Always include the period.

St. Joseph Chapel - Never St. Joseph’s Chapel.

Updated November 2018