

Marketing & Communications Style Guide

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Seventh Edition

**Toronto
Metropolitan
University**



Document Overview

Toronto Metropolitan University's Marketing and Communications Style Guide ensures consistency and clarity in university communications. While created for public materials from University Relations, it's available to all TMU community members as a reference and should be followed across university publications and marketing materials.

The guide supplements the *Canadian Press Stylebook*, *Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* and *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, which TMU follows. It also details exceptions to the Canadian Press style unique to the university. It should be noted that some formal documents like invitations and certificates may have different rules.

Note: This style guide is organized by general category and then subdivided into a list of rules or subcategories.

Note: Please reference the TMU Language Guidelines for information on how to use short forms and variations of the university name.

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Abbreviations

1. Only use abbreviations alone if the term is very familiar to most readers.

Examples: CBC, RCMP, NDP

Though the abbreviation TMU may be commonly understood to be the abbreviation of the university's name, always spell out on first use, i.e., Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU).

2. When using an abbreviation that is not well known, write the full name in the first reference with the abbreviation in parentheses. Use the abbreviation in all subsequent references. It is a good idea to limit abbreviation use when possible.

Example: The Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science (FEAS) is home to programs in biomedical engineering, aerospace engineering and architectural science. Schools within FEAS take full advantage of their location in downtown Toronto.

3. These are some commonly used abbreviations at Toronto Metropolitan University:

- **FCS** Faculty of Community Services
- **FEAS** Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science
- **FOA** Faculty of Arts
- **FOS** Faculty of Science
- **ILC** International Living/Learning Centre
- **MAC** Mattamy Athletic Centre
- **OVPR** Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation
- **RAC** Recreation and Athletic Centre
- **SCC** Student Campus Centre
- **SOM** School of Medicine
- **SLC** Student Learning Centre
- **TMU** Toronto Metropolitan University
- **TRSM** Ted Rogers School of Management
- **YSGPS** Yeates School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Alumni

1. For females, use “alumna” (sing.) and “alumnae” (pl.).
2. For males, use “alumnus” (sing.) and “alumni” (pl.).
3. For non-binary individuals, or if there is uncertainty about an individual's gender, use “alumnus.”
4. When referring to a mixed group of alumni, use the term “alumni.”

5. Avoid using the term “alum.”

6. In Toronto Met University magazine and in news articles on TorontoMet Today, alumni are referred to by full name, program and graduation year on first reference and by surname only in subsequent references.

Example: Doug Smith, Radio and Television Arts '89. Smith is now the news director at a radio station in Calgary.

Note: Marketing and other materials may follow a less formal style as needed.

7. Use the backwards apostrophe (') in front of the alum's year of graduation.

Bulleted lists

1. For lists, the following apply:

- The introductory sentence is usually an independent clause and ends with a colon.
- When each of the bulleted items is particularly long, each item should begin with an uppercase letter and end with a period.
- When each of the bulleted items is short, each item should begin with a lowercase letter and end with no punctuation.
- Refrain from using colons within the list.

Example: The main parts of the brain are responsible for a variety of functions, each crucial for daily life:

- The cerebrum is the largest part of the brain and controls conscious thought, memory and voluntary muscle movements.
- The cerebellum is vital for coordinating muscle movements and maintaining balance.
- The brainstem connects the cerebrum and cerebellum to the spinal cord and controls basic body functions.

2. If there is a reason to number a list – for example, if the list describes a set of instructions that need to be performed in a particular order – each item listed should be identified with a number. Each item begins with a capital and ends with a period.

Example: To register for classes, please follow these steps:

1. Log in to the student portal using your university ID and password.
2. Navigate to the “Course Registration” section and search for available classes.
3. Add your desired courses to your schedule and click “Submit” to finalize your registration.

Campus buildings and rooms

Each TMU building has a full, preferred name and an associated abbreviation. See torontomu.ca/maps for a complete list of building names and abbreviations.

1. In most communications, use abbreviations when identifying rooms and buildings.

Example: Room RCC-203, Rogers Communications Centre

2. Capitalize rooms, labs and lecture theatres that have an official name, such as the Harry Rosen Lecture Theatre. A few rooms around campus that do not bear official names but are well known by the university community should also be capitalized.

Example: Hub in the Podium

Note: If in doubt about how to refer to a space that may be named for a donor, please email Development Communications at david.kinahan@torontomu.ca.

3. For event locations on posters and in other communications, list the details in the following order: room, building, street address, Toronto Metropolitan University

Example: Room POD-250, Podium
350 Victoria Street
Toronto Metropolitan University

Note: If the audience is internal only, Toronto Metropolitan University does not need to be included in the event address.

4. When referring to campus locations, use “Toronto campus” or “Brampton campus.”

Capitalization

The Canadian Press rule for capitalization is to capitalize all proper names, trade names, government departments and agencies of government, names of associations, companies, clubs, religions, languages, nations, races, places and addresses. Otherwise, lowercase is favoured where a reasonable option exists.

Refer to *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* guide for more information.

Academic subjects, programs and courses

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

Examples: She is registering for a history course.
Darren is taking an English course.

2. Capitalize full and complete names of faculties, schools and departments. If a partial name is used, use lowercase when talking about faculties, schools and departments. Lowercase program and course names.

Examples: Judith is taking communications in society. Judith is a sociology student. The School of Interior Design is located on Church Street. The chair of the geography department is speaking tonight. The Faculty of Science is celebrating its tenth anniversary.

Administrative offices

The word “office” should be in lowercase when following a service or department, but it should be capitalized when it is part of a formal name.

Examples: The undergraduate admissions office is on the first floor of the Podium building. The Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation is located at 1 Dundas St. W.

Board of governors and senate

Capitalize when using the full and proper name, but use lowercase for the general term.

Examples: Toronto Metropolitan University Board of Governors, Toronto Metropolitan Board of Governors, Toronto Metropolitan University Senate, Toronto Metropolitan Senate, senate, board of governors

Faculties

When referring to a single faculty, capitalize the entire faculty name. When referring to multiple faculties, in subsequent references or to a faculty in a general sense, use lowercase.

Example: The Faculty of Community Services is one of many faculties at TMU. The faculty accepts applications in September.

Note: This rule also applies to schools.

People

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples and races.

Example: Aboriginal, Black, Haida, Indigenous and Spanish.

It's recommended to lowercase “white” in keeping with common practice in publications such as the Toronto Star, CBC and Maclean's.

Proper names vs. regular nouns

Capitalize proper names of subjects but not common nouns.

Example: Now he's bringing students up to speed with Challenge Accepted, a free, beginner-focused coding workshop.

Titles

1. Capitalize titles when they appear before names.

Example: Vice-President Smith.

2. Use lowercase for titles that appear after names.

Example: Joan Smith, vice-president

3. Use lowercase for titles when they appear without names.

Example: A new dean has been appointed.

4. Do not repeat the title after it has been used once. In second reference, use only the surname.

Example: Dean John Smith spoke at a special meeting of the senate. Smith provided an update on student engagement activities.

University

On second reference, use lowercase for “university” when referring to Toronto Metropolitan University.

Example: The university is known for its focus on experiential learning.

Commonly used words and terms

Athletic teams

Capitalize TMU Bold and use lowercase for the subsequent team description.

Example: TMU Bold men's basketball team.

Academic terms

Commonly used terms include the following terms, which are not capitalized:

- emerita (fem.), emeritus (male), emeritae (pl. female), emeriti (pl. male), emeriti (non-binary or unknown gender)
- honorary doctorate
- postdoctoral, postdoctorate, postgraduate
- post-secondary

Phrases to describe TMU

1. When describing the TMU community, use this phrase in this manner: ...students, faculty and staff...
2. When describing the core activities of TMU, use this phrase in this manner: ...learning, teaching and research...

Schools, departments, programs etc.

Commonly used names at TMU include the following:

- Ted Rogers School of Management
- Ted Rogers School of Business Management
- Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Ted Rogers School of Information Technology Management
- Ted Rogers School of Retail Management
- The Black Star Collection at Toronto Metropolitan University
- The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education (abbreviate to The Chang School on subsequent references)
- DMZ at Toronto Metropolitan University

For a full list of faculties and programs, visit the programs page of the TMU website: torontomu.ca/programs/faculties

Degrees

1. Degrees can be abbreviated or written out in full, depending on what is appropriate for the communication. When writing out in full, use lowercase and apostrophes.

Examples: TMU offers a bachelor's degree in applied science. The university offers master's degrees. Lyla earned a bachelor of engineering from TMU.

2. When abbreviating a degree, omit the periods. Use the TMU calendar as a reference for degree abbreviations. The calendar is available online at torontomu.ca/calendar.

Examples: BAA, BA (Hons), BJourn, MASc, PhD, BEng, MSW, BArchSc, BSc, BASc, JD, MD.

Executive group titles

Marketing and Communications style is to follow Canadian Press and hyphenate “vice-president.” Ampersands are not used and commas are inserted after “vice-president” and “vice-provost.”

The following is a list of how titles would appear in most prose and copy. Please note that capitals are acceptable for invitations, business cards and other types of titling. (See [page 6](#) for more details on executive titles.)

- president and vice-chancellor
- provost and vice-president, academic
- vice-president, equity and community inclusion
- vice-president, research and innovation
- vice-president, administration and operations
- vice-president, university advancement and alumni relations
- vice-provost, faculty affairs
- vice-provost, students
- vice-provost, academic
- vice-provost, university planning

Forms of address

1. For professional and academic titles, do not use “Dr.,” “Prof.,” “Mr.” or “Ms.” to preface a name. Use the full name in first reference and the surname in subsequent references.

Example: Joan Smith has received a \$400,000 grant to study bio-solids. Smith is the lead investigator on the collaborative project.

Use “Dr.” for licensed health-care professionals only on first reference. Do not use “Dr.” for people with doctorates outside the health-care field. If pertinent, state that a person has a doctoral degree and give the discipline.

Note: Each province decides which health-care practitioners may use “Dr.” (In Ontario, this includes chiropractors, physicians, psychologists, dentists, optometrists and podiatrists.)

Note: For marketing materials, the full range of options is available. In a more informal piece, for example, the first name can be used in subsequent references. In some formal communications, “Prof.” or “Dr.” may be appropriate and may be used throughout the piece. “Prof.” is the preferred usage when referring to a professor.

2. Use only the term “professor” to describe full, associate, assistant, adjunct and limited-term professors. Do not distinguish rank. Note that “emeritus” is a permissible description of professor.

Example: Sandeep Singh, a professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, has received a research grant.

Note: In this example, Sandeep Singh holds the actual title of assistant professor.

3. Lowercase “professor” when describing a faculty member in conjunction with the subject.

Example: TMU political science professor Wayne Petrozzi talks politics with TorontoMet Today.

4. When describing sessional and part-time instructors, including The Chang School instructors who are not professors, use the term “continuing education contract lecturer” (singular) or “Chang School teaching staff” (plural).

Example: John Jones, a continuing education contract lecturer at The Chang School, has been nominated for a Gemini Award. Alan Wong, an instructor in FCS, is hosting a panel in May.

5. For those holding special titles such as “professor of distinction” or “visiting professor,” do not use the term “professor.” Use the full description on first reference and do not use a title in second reference or as a preface to the name.

Example: Melinda Ng has been named a visiting professor in the School of Interior Design. Ng has many years of industry experience.

6. In all but the most formal communications, such as letters or invitations, it is not necessary to use the term “Honourable” when describing federal and provincial cabinet ministers, judges, etc. Instead, use the person’s full name on first reference and surname on subsequent references.

Examples: The statement was released by Justice Beverley McLachlin. McLachlin explained the decision in a press conference later that day.

Inclusive language

Use they/them/theirs; him/his; she/her, as the person prefers. Use inclusive, gender-neutral terms when possible (“people,” not “men and women”).

Use “transgender” as an adjective: transgender people or a transgender person. Do not use “transgenders” and “transgendered.”

What used to be called Aboriginal Student Services is now Indigenous Students Services.

The letter p in “Indigenous Peoples” is always capitalized and pluralized.

Whenever possible, identify an Indigenous person’s group, territory, affiliation, First Nation or people.

Example: Angie Wahienhawi Barnes, grand chief of the Mohawk council at Akwesasne Territory near Cornwall, Ont.

Use the acronym “2SLGBTQ+.”

There are now six equity-deserving groups: women, racialized people, Indigenous Peoples, Black people, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQ+ people.

Use “white,” not “Caucasian.”

Lowercase terms such as racialized, multiracial, biracial, multi-ethnic.

Place an emphasis on the person first when referring to an ability/disability, mental health and housing status.

Examples: A person living with a disability. A person with epilepsy. A person living with a mental health condition. A man living with homelessness. A person experiencing homelessness.

Note: Avoid everyday, ableist language like “hands-on” and instead look for alternatives like “interactive,” “direct,” “individual.” Avoid using “crazy,” “insane,” “stupid,” “lame.” Avoid defining behaviour as “normal” or “abnormal.” Avoid euphemisms like “fall on deaf ears,” or “turn a blind eye to.”

Italics

Italicize and capitalize principal words in the titles of all books, movies, broadcast shows, plays, poems, works of visual art, published speeches, songs and other compositions. Magazines and periodicals are not italicized.

Examples: the Globe and Mail, *Apocalypse Now*, *In Flanders Fields*, Toronto Life, *The Great Gatsby*, *World at Six* on CBC.

Lists of names within announcements from senior executives

For communications from senior executives about search committees, university-wide commissions and other, similar groupings of students, faculty and staff, use the following format for lists:

1. Names appear in alphabetical order.
2. Name appears on first line, identifying information on second line.
3. For positions senior to chair, do not use the term “professor.” For chairs, use “Professor and Chair.”
4. Individuals holding endowed chairs may have the chair listed in their identifying information.
5. For students, list the program, not the school or department.
6. On long lists, it is an acceptable option to group the individuals as faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, alumni, etc.
7. Capitalize individual titles and committee names.

Examples:

Mark Appleton
Professor, School of Image Arts

Manjit Heru
Professor and Chair, Department of Economics

Sara Koo
Interim Associate Dean, Faculty of Community Services

Joanne Lundrigan
Student, Interior Design

Sam Smith
Ontario Hydro Research Chair and Associate Dean
The Creative School

Numbers

1. Spell out whole numbers below 10 and use figures for 10 and above.

Examples: one, two, nine, 10, 14

2. Use numerals when referencing grades, days, room numbers and years. Capitalize the word associated with the term.

Examples: Grade 12, Game 7, Year 1

3. For phone and fax numbers, use dashes and add a comma before the extension.

Example: 416-979-5000, ext. 1234

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

Examples: 7 a.m., 7:30 p.m., midnight, noon

5. 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 Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2011. She is graduating in October 2011.

Punctuation

Below are general rules for punctuation for dealing with common issues. For more details, refer to *The Canadian Press Stylebook*.

Apostrophes

Use apostrophes to indicate missing letters and figures or to show possession.

Examples: she'd, rock 'n' roll, the late '40s, Chris's condominium, boys' toys, witness's testimony, Socrates' play, Eugen Sakhnenko, Image Arts '11.

Colons

Use a colon to introduce an amplification, a list, an example or a formal question or quotation.

Example: I have made three dishes: a salad, grilled salmon and curried chicken.

Commas

Use a comma to separate items in a list and to take the place of "and" when modifying a noun. Do not use the serial comma (the comma before "and") in lists of three or more items, but use it when the last element contains a conjunction to avoid confusion.

Examples: I am in a fantastic, spectacular mood. I am going to Paris, London and Milan. I'd like to thank my professors, Dr. Evans, and the dean.

Dashes

There are two types of dashes: an en dash and an em dash. The en dash is used to represent "to" as in "9-5." The em dash is used to punctuate phrases within sentences. Use em dashes with spaces on both sides — like this — and en dashes without spaces for ranges like 1955–2001.

Example: The university has increased its investment in bursaries – along with scholarships and awards – and will be doing even more as the fall term comes to a close.

Ellipsis

An ellipsis is used for condensing written text. Each period in the ellipsis has a space before and after it. Place other required punctuation before the ellipsis. An ellipsis at the end of a sentence will have four periods with no space between the first period and the last word.

Examples: We must try harder ... produce more ... lower our expectations....

Hyphens

Two or more words are hyphenated when they are used as adjectives. Hyphens are not required after an adverb (a word ending in "ly").

Examples: a first-class seat, a dimly lit room

Unless used in proper names around the university, hyphenate "well-being."

Examples: Mental health and well-being is an important facet of our lives. The university broke ground on the Student Wellbeing Centre in 2025.

Quotation marks

Use double quotation marks for direct quotes and to set off ironic or unfamiliar words.

Use single quotation marks for quotes within a quote.

Place periods and commas inside double quotation marks.

Place colons and semicolons outside.

Question marks and exclamation points go inside the quotation marks when they are part of the original quote.

Place question marks and exclamation points outside the quotation marks when they apply to the entire sentence.

Example: Joan said, "And then she replied, 'I don't like him.'"

Semi-colons

These punctuation marks are used to join two closely related thoughts when each of the items on either side of the mark is a complete sentence. The semi-colon is also used to separate items in a list that contains commas.

Examples: There is fruit on the counter; you can have either apples or oranges. We are visiting the moon; Jupiter, Mars and Venus; and a black hole.

Typographic notes

1. Include only one space after a period.
2. Don't use symbols in written text, except for "@," but only when dealing with email addresses and social media.
3. In copy, use the ampersand only when it is part of a formal name.

For the new landmark lock-up, ampersands are included in the faculty, program and department names as a default for design reasons. Please note, the ampersands in those cases are not to be used in copy unless they are part of the formal name.

Examples: Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science, Accounting & Finance

Usage notes

1. Don't use "over" or "under" when describing money or amounts; instead, use "more than" or "less than."
2. Follow Canadian spellings.

Examples: colour, neighbour, endeavour

3. Use "health care" as a noun and "health-care" as an adjective.

Examples: The new policy aims to improve access to health care for all citizens. The School of Medicine will address the demand for health-care professionals.

Web terms and address formats

1. For web addresses, do not include "http://www." Instead, write the website as follows: torontomu.ca.
2. When ending a sentence with a website address, include the final period, although it is sometimes best to reword the sentence.

Examples: To learn more, go to torontomu.ca.
Go to torontomu.ca to learn more.

3. Proper forms for some selected web terms are as follows:

- email
- website
- internet
- online

4. For accessibility purposes, when you are including a URL in web copy, do not say "For more information, go here." Instead, use descriptive links.

Example: "For more information, visit the School of Medicine website."

Contact

This style guide will be updated as needed. If you have any comments or questions about the guide, please contact the following:

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