STYLE GUIDE FOR COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION REPORT

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The following guidelines, many of which are included in The A&M System Written Style Guidelines, are to be used for composing the narrative for each response:

Referencing Texas A&M University-Commerce

When referencing Texas A&M University-Commerce, use "Texas A&M University-Commerce" on first reference and "A&M-Commerce" or the "University" on second reference. Do not put a space between the letters and the ampersand (i.e., A & M).

Referencing the A&M System

When referencing the A&M System, use "The Texas A&M University System" on first reference (with a capital "T" in "the") and "the A&M System" or "Texas A&M System" on second reference. Do not put a space between the letters and the ampersand (i.e., A & M).

Correct: The Texas A&M University System
Second reference: A&M System or Texas A&M System

Incorrect: TAMUS
            TAMU System

Referencing A&M System administration

Following are correct references for the A&M System Board of Regents:

· Board of Regents
· The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents
· Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System
· the A&M System Board of Regents (on second reference)
· Texas A&M System Board of Regents (on second reference)

Lowercase "board" and "regents" if used separately.

· The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents today approved new degree programs at three A&M System universities.
· At its regularly scheduled meeting, the board discussed the importance of collaboration between A&M System universities and agencies.

Referencing specific members of the Board of Regents

The offices in the A&M System building in College Station should be referred to as "System Offices." (These offices were formerly called the "System Administrative and General Offices" or "SAGO.") "System Offices" take a plural verb.
The System Offices provide support for the members of the A&M System.

Uppercase a title when it comes before a name, but lowercase a title when it comes after a name.

- Chancellor John Sharp
- John Sharp, chancellor of the A&M System

Uppercase names of offices.

- Office of the Chancellor
- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

**SELECTED AP STYLES COMMONLY USED IN ACADEMIC WRITING**

**abbreviations**

In general, do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize. Never abbreviate *university, department* or *association*.

Abbreviations of degrees, expressions of time and names of countries take periods with no space between the elements.

- M.F.A., a.m., U.S.A.

To prevent awkward line breaks, do not put a space between initials used as a first name.

- B.J. Crain

Most abbreviations are spelled without periods: CFO, CIA. Add an "s" but no apostrophe to plural forms of abbreviations:

- The committee was made up of CEOs and CFOs.

The first mention of organizations, firms, agencies, groups, etc., should be spelled out.

- The Texas Engineering Experiment Station is the engineering research agency of the State of Texas. TEES was established in 1914.

**academic degrees** (also see *doctoral, doctorate*)

Readers may not be familiar with academic degrees. It usually is better to use a phrase instead of an abbreviation.

- John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology, said the study was flawed.

Use an apostrophe: bachelor's degree, master's degree, and so on.

Uppercase: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy, and so on.

Use abbreviations such as B.A., B.S., M.A., M.S. and Ph.D. (with no spaces between letters) only when needed to identify many individuals by degree on first reference or if usage would make the preferred form cumbersome. Spell out all others. Use these only after the person's full name, and set the abbreviation off by commas.

- John Wimberly, Ph.D., is president of the National Skydiving Association.

**academic colleges/departments**

Capitalize if referring to a specific department or other academic unit by its full proper name. Otherwise, use lower case.

- Mays Business School
· College of Science and Technology
· history department
· Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
· She is a professor in the college.

academic titles
Lowercase and spell out titles when not used with an individual's name.

· The dean provided a list of students.
· The graduate assistant taught a class.
· The chancellor will speak today at noon.

Capitalize and spell out when a title precedes a name.

· Chancellor John Sharp met with Dean Jill Burk yesterday.

Very long titles are more readable when placed after a name.

· Terry Dickson, vice president for business and administration, nominated the work-study student for a national award.

adjunct
*Adjunct* refers to a temporary faculty appointment; lowercase.

adviser
Use the spelling that ends in *-er* (not advisor) unless the other spelling is part of an official title.

ages
Always use figures.

· The 19-year-old student took graduate-level courses.
· The student, who switched his major 11 times, is 24 years old.
· The dean is in his 50s. (No apostrophe)

alumnus, alumna, alumni, alumnae
*Alumnus* (*alumni* in the plural) refers to a man who has graduated from a school. *Alumna* (*alumnae* in the plural, but rarely used) refers to a woman who has graduated from a school. *Alumni* refers to a group of men and women.

baccalaureate
In most cases, the less formal *bachelor's degree* is preferred.

capitalization
Capitalize official names; do not capitalize unofficial, informal, shortened or generic names. Do not capitalize in phrases such as *the center, the institute or the recently renovated museum*. Do not capitalize seasons or semesters (Spring Break is an exception).

· The College of Engineering, *but* the engineering school
· Texas Task Force 1, *but* the task force
· Capitalize names of celebrations, such as Founders Day. Do not capitalize seasons, semesters or academic periods. *The exception is Spring Break.*
· Dr. Ballard will teach the Philosophy and History of Adult Education class next semester. He will teach advanced geology.
· She enrolled in fall 2005 but decided to postpone graduate school after she won the lottery.

capital/capitol
*Capital* refers to the city; *capitol* refers to the building where the seat of government is housed. Capitalize
when referring to the building. *Capitol building* is redundant.

- The Capitol is in Austin, which is the capital city of Texas.

**chairman**

Use *chairman* or chair in references to positions on the Board of Regents, even for female members.

- Wendy Gramm was chairman of the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs.
- She also was chair of an ad hoc committee.

**commas**

Do not use a comma before the *and* or other conjunctions in a series. Elsewhere, use commas only when the potential for confusion exists without them, such as complex sentences, or before the concluding conjunction of a series if one of the elements in the series contains a conjunction.

- She served on the committee to review scholarships, grants and financial aid.
- Texas A&M seeks students who have the skills to excel in a competitive academic environment, who bring a fresh perspective to their area of study, and who show a passion for ideas seen only in leaders.
- The lecture began with a discourse on the professor's breakfast, which consisted of orange juice, a decaf latte, and ham and eggs.

**committee names**

Capitalize the names of committees.

- The Academic Affairs Committee will meet tomorrow.

**course work**

Two words.

**credit hours**

Use numerals to refer to credit hours.

- 3 credit hours

**date**

When referring to month and year, add a comma after the year unless it ends the sentence. However, do not add a comma following the month unless a date is used. Similarly, when referring to both a city and state, add a comma after the state.

- Your memo of July 28, 2005, summarized the issue perfectly.
- She graduated in May 2002.
- After three years, she started to consider Stephenville, Texas, home.

**dean's list**

Lowercase.

**doctor**

Use *Dr.* on first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who holds a doctorate in a medical field of study.

- Dr. Nancy W. Dickey

If appropriate in the text, *Dr.* also may be used on first reference before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. Since most readers identify *Dr.* only with physicians, make sure that the individual's specialty is mentioned in the first or second reference. Do not use *Dr.* on subsequent
references, but rather, use the individual's last name. Also, do not use Dr. before the names of people who hold only honorary degrees.

**doctrinal, doctorate** (also see [academic degrees](#))

Use doctoral as an adjective and doctorate as a noun.

- She received her doctoral degree last Saturday.
- She received her doctorate in English.

**em dash**

Put a space on both sides of the dash in all uses except the start of a paragraph.

- Integrity — a Texas A&M core value — is central to the character of the university.

**faculty**

When used as a collective noun, faculty is singular.

- The faculty at Texas A&M International University is known for preparing students for graduate school.

**Footnotes and Evidence Citations**

Footnote style for our documentation. Footnote numbers in the text of the documents cited are TO BE. **another decision;** Use a “hover” feature for the documentation.

**international students**

This phrase is preferred over foreign students.

**Internet**

Capitalize. Use Internet instead of 'Net or the Net.

**state/federal**

Capitalize when referring to a governmental entity, but not when referring to geographical areas or systems/theories of government.

- The current State budget is the largest in history.
- The student is from the state of Virginia.
- The city is seeking federal aid to help with rebuilding costs.
- The Federal government is not always a supporter of the federal system.

**state abbreviations**

Do not use the two-letter ZIP code abbreviations in text. Use the abbreviations below, as outlined by the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. Use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations only with full addresses, including ZIP code.

**tables and charts**

When appropriate, use tables and charts within the narrative to present our case. If appropriate, a photograph can be used.

**telephone numbers**

Be consistent with usage throughout a document, however you choose to write the number.

- (979) 555-0000
- 979-555-0000
- 979.555.0000
titles
Capitalize a person's title when it precedes the name. Do not capitalize when it follows a name or stands by itself.

- President Ray M. Keck III
- Governor John Doe Jr. attended the game with his father, John Doe Sr.
- John Sharp, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, spoke at graduation.
- The president of the faculty senate was late, but the chairman of the Board of Regents was on time.

United States
Spell out as a noun; abbreviate (with no space between the letters) as an adjective.

- The United States is a popular destination for foreign students.
- The official U.S. policy has not changed.

-wide
Do not hyphenate systemwide when referring to the A&M System. Similarly, do not hyphenate statewide or nationwide. Hyphenate if the word preceding -wide is capitalized.

- His achievements once were known only systemwide; today they are known Texas-wide.

work-study
Lowercase and hyphenate.

years
In most cases, use the full four digits. Occasionally, the use of only the last two digits is preferred. Do not use an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries (e.g., 1980s, the 1900s).

- Enrollment for fall 2011 rose sharply.
- He graduated in the 1980s.
- The Legislature is working on appropriations for the 2005-2006 biennium.
- We have plenty of travel money for FY 2006.
- The banner read, "The Class of '72 welcomes you to Corpus Christi."