academic degrees: If mention of a degree is necessary to establish someone’s credentials, the preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase such as: John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s degree, a master’s, etc., but there is no possessive in Associate in Science, Associate in Arts, Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science. (Some disciplines at Pierce College also offer occupational certificate programs and certificate of achievement programs. See Pierce’s General Catalog for more details.)

Also: an associate degree (no possessive).

Use such abbreviations as A.A., A.S., B.A., M.A., LL.D. and Ph.D. only when the need to identify many individuals by degree on first reference would make the preferred form cumbersome. Use these abbreviations only after a full name—never after just a last name.

When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: Daniel Moynihan, Ph.D., spoke.

Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference:

Wrong: Dr. Pam Jones, Ph.D.
Right: Dr. Pam Jones, a chemist.

academic departments: Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives: the department of history, the history department, the department of English, the English department, or when department is part of the official and formal name: University of Connecticut Department of Medicine. Do not abbreviate department.

addresses: use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address:
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: Pennsylvania Avenue. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues.

All similar words (alley, drive, road, terrace, etc.) always are spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number; lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.

Always use figures for an address number: 9 Morningside Circle.

Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names; use figures with two letters for 10th and above: 7 Fifth Ave., 100 21st St.

Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: 222 E. 42nd St., 562 W. 43rd St., 600 K St. N.W. Do not abbreviate if the number is omitted: East 42nd Street, West 43rd Street.

Use periods in the abbreviation P.O. for P.O. Box numbers.

affect, effect: Affect, as a verb, means to influence: The game will affect the standings. Affect, as a noun, is best avoided.
Effect, as a verb, means to cause: *He will effect many changes in the company.*
Effect, as a noun, means result: *The effect was overwhelming. He miscalculated the effect of his actions.*

*ages:* Always use figures for people and animals (but not for inanimates): *The girl is 15 years old; the law is eight years old.* Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun. Examples: *A 5-year-old boy, but the boy is 5 years old. The woman is in her 30s* (no apostrophe).

*a.m., p.m.:* Lowercase, with periods. Avoid the redundant *10 a.m. this morning.* *Noon* and *midnight* stand alone. Don’t use *12 noon* or *12 a.m.*

*apostrophe:* In general, use to show possession: *the alumni’s contributions, women’s rights, Pierce’s reputation.* If the word ends with an *S* put the apostrophe after the *S*: the campus’ appearance, the reporters’ deadlines. Do not use an apostrophe if it’s simply a plural and NOT a possessive.

Wrong: She gave the CD’s to me.
Right: He has too many CDs to count.

*held, hold:* Use held only in the literal sense: *He held the pencil. She wants to hold the baby.* Do not use held when referring to events, concerts, conventions, etc. In most cases, the word held can simply be removed with no impact. For rare occasions, the words *hosted* or *sponsored* suffices.

Wrong: The club held its meeting on Thursday.
Right: The club had its meeting on Thursday.
Wrong: The JACC statewide convention will be held at the Wilshire Grand Los Angeles Hotel in April 2008.
Right: The JACC statewide convention will take place at the Wilshire Grand Los Angeles Hotel in April 2008.

*it’s, its:* *It’s* is a contraction for *it is* or *it has: It’s up to you. It’s been a long time.* *Its* is the possessive form of the neuter pronoun: *The dog chased its tail.*

*Los Angeles Community College District:* Use full name on first reference. Use *LACCD* (no periods) on second reference. Its nine colleges makes it the largest community college district in California. The campuses are East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Mission College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Los Angeles Valley College, Pierce College and West Los Angeles College.

*months:* Capitalize the names in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.* Spell out the months with five letters or less: *March, April, May, June and July.* Spell out all months when using alone or with a year alone: *The class ended in December. He was born in August 1980.* (No comma between the month and year if a specific date isn’t used.)
numerals: Spell out one through nine; 10 and higher use numerals. Since graduating high school three years ago, Susan has had 12 jobs. Use numerals for sports scores (a 4-3 win), percentages (a 3 percent pay increase), court decisions (a 5-4 decision), ratios (a 2-to-1 ratio), weights (The baby weighed 9 pounds, 7 ounces.) and with million or billion (The nation has 1 million citizens. Rupert Murdoch is worth more than $5 billion.) Avoid starting a sentence with a numeral since it will need to be spelled out. If possible, rewrite the sentence.
Wrong: 993 freshmen entered the college last year.
Right: Last year 993 freshmen entered the college.

over: It generally refers to spatial relationships: The plane flew over the city.
More than is preferred with numerals: Their salaries went up more than $20 a week.

percent: One word. It takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an of construction: The teacher said 60 percent was a failing grade. He said 50 percent of the membership was there.
   It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an of construction: He said 50 percent of the members were there.
   Use figures: 1 percent, 2.5 percent (use decimals, not fractions), 10 percent.
   For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero: The cost of living rose .06 percent.
   Repeat percent with each individual figure: He said 10 percent to 30 percent of the electorate may not vote.

Pierce College: Use Pierce College on first reference, Pierce on second reference. Although Pierce College is part of the nine-college Los Angeles Community College District and is sometimes referred to as Los Angeles Pierce College or L.A. Pierce College, use Pierce College.

quote marks: Use quote marks for exact, word-for-word comments. Put a comma inside the ending quote marks. “Pierce College is a great place to learn,” said Rob O’Neil, chairman of the media arts department.

Roundup: Use the Roundup on first reference, Roundup on second reference: He was excited to be a reporter for the Roundup.

seasons: Lowercase spring, summer, fall, winter and derivatives such as springtime unless part of a formal name: Dartmouth Winter Carnival, Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics. Capitalize seasons when the exact year is included: Fall 2008 semester

series of three or more: Do not use a comma before the word “and” when listing a series of three or more things: The flag was red, white and blue. She has lived in many communities, including Woodland Hills, Canoga Park, Toluca Lake and Reseda.
sheriff: The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department provides security for all LACCD colleges. Deputies wear tan shirts, cadets wear pale blue shirts, and sheriff’s officers wear white shirts. All three groups are identifiable by either the lettering on their shirts of jackets, or by the shoulder patches on their uniforms. (There is only one sheriff, Lee Baca.)

Sheriff’s officers are armed, but not sworn and cannot make arrests. If an arrest needs to be made, they call upon a sheriff’s deputy. When we call for emergency assistance, sheriff’s officers are the ones who usually respond first. (Usually only one deputy is on campus at a time, and late at night there is sometimes no deputy on campus at all). Sheriff’s officers do not consider themselves "guards" or "security guards" and hate it when the media identifies them as such.

Use an apostrophe when referring to the possessive: sheriff’s deputy, sheriff’s cadet, sheriff’s personnel.

Wrong: The sheriffs arrived shortly after the accident.
Right: The sheriff’s deputy arrived shortly after the accident.

spacing: Use only one space between sentences.

titles: In general, capitalize formal titles used directly before a person’s name: There will be many speakers at graduation including President Robert Garber. If the title is used after the person’s name, use lowercase. Robert Garber, president of Pierce College, used to be the dean of student services. Use courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss) only in direct quotations. Otherwise, simply use the person’s first and last name.

to: Use to between two dates, times or numerals: The museum, which has a mummy display from June to August, is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. (Do not use a hyphen to separate dates, times or numerals.)

that, which (pronouns): Use that and which in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name. Use that for essential clauses, important to the meaning of the sentence and without commas: I remember the day that we met. Use which for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary and use commas: The dog, which had strong legs, was a natural jumper.

who, whom: Who is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase: The woman who rented the apartment moved out without notifying the owner. Who is there?

Whom is used when someone is the object of the verb or preposition: The woman to whom the apartment was rented moved out without notifying the owner. Whom do you wish to see?

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