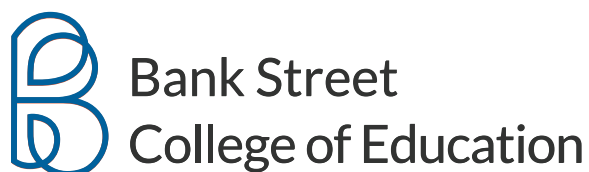


Editorial Style Guide:

Norms for Digital, Web, and Print Content

Last Revised: February 2021



The goal of this style guide is to help maintain consistency in editorial style and grammar usage across Bank Street printed materials, websites, social media platforms, and other electronic distribution models.

Please contact [**communications@bankstreet.edu**](mailto:communications@bankstreet.edu) with any questions.

Resources for Writing

In the words of *The Elements of Style* authors William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, “vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts.”

Resources for writing include the following websites:

APA Style (apastyle.org)

A good online resource from the American Psychological Association for writing with “simplicity, power, and concision.”

The Associated Press Stylebook (apstylebook.com)

An online writing and editing resource with solid grammar and style guidelines.

Commonly Misused Words and Phrases (en.oxforddictionaries.com/usage/commonly-confused-words or brians.wsu.edu/common-errors/)

Quick guides to homonyms and differences between words such as “affect” and “effect.”

The Elements of Style Online (bartleby.com/141)

A searchable version of the bestselling book, *The Elements of Style*.

The Writer’s Handbook, J. Paul Dyson

Book available in hard copy.

Citation Guidelines

APA, Chicago, and MLA style guides provide different guidelines for citations, including in-text citations and reference list entries. An overview of the differences between each style can be found at [scribbr.com/citing-sources/citation-styles](https://www.scribbr.com/citing-sources/citation-styles).

APA Citation Guidelines (owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style)

APA Citation Generator ([scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator](https://www.scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator))

Chicago Citation Guidelines ([scribbr.com/category/chicago-style](https://www.scribbr.com/category/chicago-style))

MLA Citation Guidelines (style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide)

MLA Citation Generator ([scribbr.com/mla-citation-generator](https://www.scribbr.com/mla-citation-generator))

Plagiarism

Bank Street College defines plagiarism as “the use of another person’s ideas, words, or theories as one’s own or without citation in an academic submission.” Avoid in all cases.

Bank Street Graduate School of Education website

(graduate.bankstreet.edu/student-services-support/policies-of-conduct-standards)

The Policies of Conduct & Standards page’s “Academic Standards & Grievance Procedures” section includes a definition of plagiarism and resources for the proper citation of sources.

General Editorial Guidelines for the Website

Keep it simple.

To communicate effectively online, always strive to write as clearly and concisely as possible. Remember that website users only read 20 to 28 percent of copy on the page. Tips for creating copy that is easy to scan include:

- Put the most important information “above the fold” of the page
- Break up large “walls” of text into chunks of copy with multiple headlines
- Avoid duplicate information on a page, even when you are saying the same thing in two different ways

Use plain language and the active voice.

Use a less formal/more conversational tone for the web. Help users quickly digest the page’s content with the following approach:

- Use a 10th-grade reading level. Tools for checking readability include Microsoft Word’s built-in tool and webfx.com/tools/read-able
- Avoid jargon. If introducing unique-to-Bank Street language, provide context and/or define its meaning in the copy or via link

Get to the point, fast!

While there is certainly a place for flowery or expository writing, the purpose of the website is primarily to inform. The more quickly this is achieved, the better the user’s experience. Follow these guidelines for length of content:

- Sentence: no more than 15-20 words
- Paragraph: 40-70 words; can be as little as two sentences
- Page: 300-700 total word count
- Headings: should not exceed 8-10 words

Glossary of Norms

A

acknowledgment:

Spell as “acknowledgment,” not “acknowledgement.”

acronyms:

All caps, no periods.

Avoid acronyms in headlines.

Do not use acronyms in first mention of an organization or institution in a formal document. Instead, spell out the proper name.

advisor:

Not “adviser.”

After School Program:

Capitalize the first letter of each word when referring to the Bank Street After School Program. Simply using “After School” is also acceptable. When used generally and not referring specifically to Bank Street’s program, use

lowercase (i.e., “There are many high-quality after school programs in New York City.”). Do not hyphenate.

age:

Use hyphens when referring to someone’s age as an adjective or a noun. For example, “She has a 10-year-old son in the School for Children.”

When referring to multiple ages: “The program is for 7- and 8-year-old girls.”

If the sentence or phrase is stating that someone is so many years old, do not hyphenate. For example, “The student is 11 years old” or “He will turn 14 years old in July.”

Always use numerals when referring to age; do not spell out (9-year-old child instead of nine-year-old child).

alumna:

Singular female graduate.

alumnae:

Plural of female graduates.

alumnus:

Singular male graduate.

alumni:

Plural of male graduates and also used to refer to both male and female graduates.

alumni/graduation date formatting:

Always format in this order: Name, School (abbreviated), apostrophe preceding the last two digits of the graduation year. For example, “Mary Shelley, GSE ’75.”

Note: abbreviated year takes an apostrophe that curls to the left, not the right.

and/ampersand (&):

Use the word “and” in text, not an ampersand (&) unless part of a proper noun, such as a book title or proper name, such as “Straus Center for Young Children & Families.”

as well as:

Always use a comma before “as well as.” For example, “The event welcomed students, faculty, and staff, as well as parents.”

associate degree:

Within text, “associate degree” may be used. Use lowercase to spell out and do not include an apostrophe “s.”

attributions:

Use the person’s full name, followed by a comma, followed by their formal title that includes their formal division or organization (i.e., “Cecelia Traugh, Dean, Bank Street Graduate School of Education”). For Bank Street alumni, format with the school (abbreviated), an apostrophe, and the last two digits of the graduation year after the person’s full name (i.e., “Shael Polakow-Suransky, GSE ’00, President, Bank Street College”).

See examples of the correct format below:

Shael Polakow-Suransky, GSE ’00, President, Bank Street College of Education, delivered a compelling speech.

Bank Street College President Shael Polakow-Suransky, GSE ’00, delivered a compelling speech.

Shael Polakow-Suransky, GSE ’00, is the president of Bank Street College of Education.

The president delivered a compelling speech.

B**bachelor’s degree:**

Within text, “bachelor’s degree” may be used. Use lowercase to spell out and include the apostrophe.

Bank Street College of Education/**Bank Street College/Bank Street:**

The first reference to the school in text should use the proper name of the institution, “Bank Street College of Education” or “Bank Street College.”

The shorthand “Bank Street” or “the College” is acceptable in subsequent mentions, titles, and captions.

Bank Street Writers Lab:

No apostrophe in “Writers.”

Capitalize the first letter of each word.

Birth-to-Three Policy Initiative:

Use hyphens and spell out “three.”

bullets:

Short phrases are preferred, ideally no more than three to five bullets in bullet point lists.

Capitalize the first letter after every bullet. Put periods at the end of bullets when they are complete sentences, leave periods off when they are short phrases or incomplete sentences. Semicolons at the end of each bullet and a final period are not necessary.

Do not mix and match styles. Keep grammatically consistent—using either all short phrases with no punctuation or all full sentences with period at end.

C**canceled, canceling:**

Use one “l,” not two. “Cancellation” always uses two “l”s.

American English favors spelling with one “l,” while spelling with two “l”s is preferred in British English and other dialects.

catalog:

Spell as “catalog,” not “catalogue.” “Catalog” is most popular in American English.

child care:

Two words, no hyphen, in all cases.

College, the:

Use “Bank Street College of Education” or “Bank Street College” on first mention. On subsequent mentions, “the College” (with a capital C) may be used.

commas:

Always use serial (Oxford) commas for consistency. Consistent use of the serial comma will always avoid confusion.

To use serial commas, include a comma after each item in a list of three or more items, including before “and” or “or.” For example, “Students should bring pens, markers, and pencils to class today.”

course and class:

“Class” is not interchangeable with “course.” “Class” refers to an individual session of a “course.” The words “class” and “course” are both lowercase.

course names:

Capitalize the proper names of courses. For example, “Educating Infants and Toddlers: Environments.”

coursework:

One word.

curriculum/curricula:

The plural of “curriculum” is “curricula.”

D**dates:**

Use the complete month and the numeral for the date. Offset the year with a comma after the date. For example, “The event took place June 11, 2011 at Tabas Auditorium.”

Do not abbreviate months. For example, use “September” instead of “Sept.” or “Sep.” in all references except in social media or other instances where fewer characters are required.

When using a month and a year, do not separate with a

comma. For example, use “June 2011” instead of “June, 2011.”

Do not use ordinal numbers, as in “June 11th.” Instead, “The event was held on June 11.”

Do not include the year when listing a date that occurred previously within that same year. For example, if an article is posted in July 2018 that references an event held in June 2018, it should be written as “The event was held on June 18” instead of “The event was held on June 18, 2018.”

degrees:

When referring in general to a major, degree, or area of study, lowercase the name. For example, “I have a master’s degree in education” or “I studied mathematics.” When referring to an official name of a degree program, capitalize the name and if the word “program” follows, capitalize it. For example, “I graduated with a master’s degree in Progressive Leadership from Bank Street Graduate School of Education” or “I enrolled in the Progressive Leadership Program.”

Capitalize appropriate letters and omit periods in full degree names as follows:

BA for Bachelor of Arts
BS for Bachelor of Science
MA for Master of Arts
MS for Master of Science
MSEd for Master of Science in Education
MSW for Master of Social Work
PhD for Doctorate of Philosophy
EdD or Doctorate of Education

The abbreviation is acceptable on first reference or after a person’s name.

Within text, “bachelor’s degree” and “master’s degree” may be used. Use lowercase to spell out both degrees and include the apostrophe.

Do not use an apostrophe “s” with “associate degree” or “doctoral degree.”

developmental-interaction approach:

Lowercase and include hyphen in between “developmental” and “interaction.”

dialogue:

Spell as “dialogue,” not “dialog,” which is a less common, alternative spelling.

dollars:

Use the dollar sign (\$) and numerals when referring to money. For example, “\$5 lunch,” not “5 dollar lunch” or “\$5 dollar lunch” and use “\$0.50” for “50 cents.” Do not use the word “dollars.” For example, “The team was granted a \$5 million grant” is correct, “The team was granted a \$5 million dollar grant” is incorrect.

E**e.g.,:**

The abbreviation for the Latin term “exempli gratia” meaning “for example.” When possible, use the words “for example” instead.

If used, lowercase and with periods after the “e” and the “g.” Follow “e.g.” with a comma as follows: “She likes to play instruments (e.g., drums, recorder, and xylophone).”

ellipses:

Use three periods in the middle of a sentence when words are omitted from a quotation.

If an ellipsis is used at the end of a sentence, use four periods, unless the sentence ends in a question mark or exclamation point, in which case it is three periods before the question mark or exclamation point. Add a space after the periods to indicate the start of a new sentence.

For example: “Is she signed up for Bank Street Summer Camp...?” or “I believe she is signed up for Bank Street Summer Camp....”

email:

No hyphen, one word, lowercase except at the beginning of a sentence.

em-dash:

Typically referred to as a “dash” and used to set off a clause or to substitute for a comma or parentheses to emphasize a clause. If you were to remove the em-dashes and copy in between them and your sentence still makes sense, you are using an em-dash correctly.

For example, “Students traveled to three cities—Fez, Massa, and Rabat—as part of their Bank Street course.”

No spaces before and after an em-dash.

To create an em-dash on a PC, hold down the “Alt” key and type “0151” on your keypad. To create an em-dash on a Mac, hit shift, option, and dash key at the same time.

en-dash:

Longer than a hyphen but shorter than a dash, an en-dash means “through” and indicates the passage of time. For example, “The conference will be held March 18–24” or “Read pages 3–6.”

No spaces before and after an en-dash.

To create an en-dash on a PC, hold down the “Alt” key and type “0150” on your keypad. To create an en-dash on a Mac, hit option and the dash key at the same time.

ELL/English Language Learners:

First letters are always capitalized.

Use the full term “English Language Learners (ELL)” on the first reference. Use ELL or the plural ELLs on subsequent references.

ENL/English as a New Language:

First letters are always capitalized.

Use the full term “English as a New Language (ENL)” on the first reference. Use ENL on subsequent references.

F**fieldwork:**

One word.

G**GPA:**

The acronym for “grade point average” may be abbreviated in all instances.

No periods after each letter.

grades:

Spell out school grades when possible instead of using ordinal numbers (e.g., “first grade” and “sixth grade”). At 10 and above, use the numeral and its ordinal designation (e.g., “10th grade”).

Capitalize in headings and labels.

We understand that, in some cases, a need may arise to use the numeral when referring to school grades (e.g., “grade 1” or “grade 8”).

grades (School for Children):

Naming conventions for School for Children grades are as follows. When referring to age groups, such as “5/6s” and “10/11s,” no spaces are needed before or after the slash and no apostrophe is used before the “s.”

Lower School

Preschool (3/4s)

Pre-K (4/5s)

Kindergarten (5/6s)

First Grade (6/7s)

Middle School

Second Grade (7/8s)

Third Grade (8/9s)

Fourth Grade (9/10s)

Upper School

Fifth Grade (10/11s)

Sixth Grade (11/12s)

Seventh Grade (12/13s)

Eighth Grade (13/14s)

H**headlines:**

Capitalize the first letter of every major word except prepositions less than four letters long. If preposition has four or more letters, capitalize. For example, do not capitalize “by” or “of” in a headline. Do capitalize “With” or “Through” in a headline.

In headlines, capitalize the second part of a hyphenated major word if the first part is capitalized. For example, “Developmental-Interaction Approach in Home-Based Child Care Settings.”

Head Start:

Two words, capitalize “H” and “S” when referring to the early childhood development program. For example, “He is enrolled in Head Start,” or “She is enrolled in Bank Street Head Start.”

high-quality:

Always use a hyphen when used as an adjective before a noun.

For example, “This high-quality program can improve outcomes.” But if it follows and modifies a verb, do not hyphenate. For example, “This program is high quality.”

homepage:

One word.

hyphens:

Hyphens combine words (i.e., high-quality) into a single adjective modifier that precedes the noun being modified. For example, “Our classrooms offer high-quality instruction.”

When a hyphenated word is used in a predicate phrase as a noun, no hyphens. For example, “The teacher was well prepared.”

Words ending in “ly” (adverbs) are not hyphenated (i.e., “highly effective”).

Words formed with prefixes (i.e., non-profit, co-founder) are hyphenated.

Words ending in “like” are not hyphenated (i.e., businesslike) unless they are formed by proper names (i.e., Gandhi-like).

Two or more hyphenated modifiers having a common basis are treated as follows: “long- and short-term enrollment.”

Words that are not hyphenated include school year, child care, After School Program, multicultural, developmentally appropriate, and email. Always hyphenate high-quality, non-profit, developmental-interaction approach, and pre-K.

I**i.e.,:**

The abbreviation for the Latin term “id est” meaning “that is.” If possible, use “in effect” or “in other words.”

Use lowercase and with periods. It is preceded and followed by commas as follows: “Students enjoy arts and crafts, i.e., making collages.”

Integrative Master’s Project:

“Master’s” has an apostrophe and the first letter of each word is always capitalized.

Use full name in first mention; can be referred to as “IMP” in subsequent mentions if the acronym is included in parentheses after the first mention.

italics:

Italics may be used for emphasis and for publication titles.

Do not use in headlines.

J

judgment:

Spell as “judgment,” not “judgement.” Spelling without the extra “e” is preferred in American English.

K

kindergarten:

Use lowercase.

M

master’s degree:

Within text, “master’s degree” may be used. Use lowercase to spell out and include the apostrophe.

multicultural/multifaceted/multimedia:

One word, no hyphen.

N

names (person):

List full name on first mention and use last name on all subsequent mentions

Never break a proper name across two lines.

naming conventions for Bank Street College:

Use the following proper names as the first mention for Bank Street divisions, programs, awards, and/or initiatives.

Acceptable acronyms for second references in print materials noted in parentheses.

Divisions:

Bank Street Education Center
Children’s Programs
Development & Alumni Relations Office (DARO)
Graduate School of Education
The Library
Strategy & Operations

Bank Street Education Center
Birth-to-Three Policy Initiative
Center on Culture, Race & Equity (CCRE)
National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)
School System Partnerships & Programs (SSPP)
Prepared To Teach

Children’s Programs:

After School Program
School for Children
Spring Camp
Summer Camp
Family Center

Graduate School of Education:

Barbara Biber Convocation
Career Services
Centennial Innovation Fund
Continuing Professional Studies (CPS)
Disability Services Office
Early Childhood Urban Education Initiative
Educator Preparation Laboratory (EdPrepLab)
Emotionally Responsive Practice (ERP)
Emotionally Responsive Schools Conference
Infancy Institute
Kerlin Science Institute
Occasional Paper Series
Registrar’s Office
Straus Center for Young Children & Families
Teaching Kindergarten Conference
The Language Series
The Niemeyer Series
Tiorati Science Program for Schools
Travel Programs

The Library

BookFest @ Bank Street
Center for Children’s Literature
Children’s Book Committee
Children’s Book Committee Awards
 The Claudia Lewis Award
 The Flora Stieglitz Straus Award
 The Josette Frank Award
Dorothy Carter Writer-in-Residence
Irma Simonton Black and James H. Black Award for
 Excellence in Children’s Literature
Spanish Speaking Author and Illustrator Series/Ciclo de
 Autores e Ilustradores Hispanoparlantes
The Bank Street Writers Lab
The Cook Prize

Strategy & Operations:

Head Start
Liberty LEADS

New York City:

Never abbreviate New York City to “NYC” in formal documents.

Use “the city” in your second reference, if desired.

New York City Department of Education:

Use proper name on first reference whenever possible. “NYCDOE” is acceptable in subsequent uses if acronym is used in parentheses after first mention.

New York State Education Department:

Use proper name on first reference whenever possible. “NYSED” is acceptable in subsequent mentions.

non-profit:

Always use a hyphen.

numbers:

Spell out numbers from one to nine, including “first” through “ninth.”

Spell out all numbers when they appear at the beginning of a sentence.

Format ordinal numbers without superscript. For example, “112th Street,” not “112th Street.”

Percentages, ages, ratios, and floor numbers are always expressed in numbers. For example, “32 percent,” “7-year-old child,” “1:1,” or “14th floor”.

Use numerals when referring to the number of credits or grades, e.g., “3 credits” and “grades 1 to 6.”

P**paraprofessional:**

One word/no hyphen.

percent:

The word “percent” is spelled out in running text.

The % symbol can be used on display copy.

period:

Do not include periods after headlines or taglines.

Periods go inside of quotes at the end of a quotation.

Use one space instead of two after the period at the end of a sentence.

phone numbers:

Use 10-digit format separated by hyphens, such as “212-555-1212.” A preceding “1” or “+1” is not necessary. Do not include parentheses around the first set of numbers.

policymakers, policymaking:

One word.

professional development:

Do not capitalize the term “professional development.”

Abbreviate as “PD” on second reference.

pre-K:

Use lower case “p” and capital “K.” Hyphenate.

preschool:

One word, no hyphen.

program names:

The word “program” should always be capitalized when referring to the official name of a Graduate School degree program in text. For example, “The Teaching Students with Disabilities 7–12 Generalist Program is designed for applicants seeking to teach adolescents with disabilities in grades 7–12.”

R**race/ethnicity:**

Race refers to populations or groups of people of common ancestry distinguished from others by physical characteristics. Always use the uppercase (e.g., White, Black, Asian, Latino/a/x, etc.).

Ethnicity refers to populations or groups of people whose members identify with each other on the basis of common nationality or shared cultural traditions. The first letter is always capitalized (e.g., Hispanic, German, Irish, etc.).

For Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), capitalize “Black” and “Indigenous.” Spell out “and” and lowercase “people of color.”

Do not hyphenate African American, Asian American, Native American, etc.

RSVP:

No periods needed.

S

school year:

Two words. Use abbreviated year for second year of school year connotation, for example: “2017-18 school year.”

seasons:

Capitalize the seasons when referencing a specific season in a specific year, for example: Fall 2018 only. In all other mentions, use lowercase. For example: “This fall, we are going to Bear Mountain.”

Use “In Fall 2018” instead of “In the fall of 2018.”

slashes:

Do not use spaces before and after a slash. For example, “infant/toddler” is correct, not “infant / toddler.”

spacing:

Use one space instead of two at the end of a sentence. (See “period.”)

staff:

Use as a singular noun followed by singular verbs, i.e., “Staff gathers in the conference room at 3:00 PM.”

To use a plural verb, use the phrase “staff members.”

states:

When abbreviating US states, do not use periods (e.g., NY or Washington, DC).

strengths-based:

Use hyphen and include an “s” at the end of “strengths.”

student-teacher:

Use hyphen.

subjects:

Only capitalize subjects (i.e., math, science, social studies) when they are used as proper nouns (i.e., “State Science Regents” or “master’s degree in Special Education”) or if they are languages (i.e., English, French, Spanish).

When referring in general to a major, degree, or area of study, lowercase the name. For example, “I have a master’s degree in education” or “I studied mathematics.” When referring to an official name of a degree program, capitalize the name and if the word “program” follows, capitalize it. For example, “I graduated with a master’s degree in Progressive

Leadership from Bank Street Graduate School of Education” or “I enrolled in the Progressive Leadership Program.”

such as:

Always use a comma before “such as.” For example, “Attendees participated in workshops, such as ‘Emotionally Responsive Literacy as a Reflective Technique.’”

supervised fieldwork/advisement:

Not capitalized unless it is in a headline or label.

T

time:

Capitalize AM or PM. Do not separate with periods.

Include a space before AM or PM and include “:00” after all times that are on the hour. For example, “10:30 AM” or “6:00 PM.”

If it is necessary to indicate the time zone, use EST (for Eastern Standard Time, from the first Sunday in November to the second Sunday in March) or EDT (for Eastern Daylight Saving Time, from the second Sunday in March to the first Sunday in November).

titles (books, movies, academic journals, white papers, and reports):

Format using title case and italics. Use quotation marks around titles of articles, chapters, etc. within the larger source.

For example, Bank Street released a new report titled *Investing in the Birth-to-Three Workforce: A New Vision to Strengthen the Foundation for All Learning*.

titles (websites, blogs, and podcasts):

Format using title case. Do not italicize or use quotations. Use quotation marks around titles of articles, episodes, etc. within the larger source.

For example, the “Blank Walls Build Community” post is available on the School for Children’s A View With a View blog.

titles (capitalization):

Before a person’s name:

Capitalize formal titles when they appear before a person’s name (i.e., President Shael Polakow-Suransky).

After a person's name:

Capitalize titles when used as an attribution after the name (i.e., "Shael Polakow-Suransky, President, Bank Street College") or in a directory (i.e., "Shael Polakow-Suransky, President").

As a description or adjective:

Do not capitalize when used with an article, for example, "Shael Polakow-Suransky is the president of Bank Street College" or "She was an assistant teacher in the School for Children for nine years."

See "attributions" entry for additional guidelines on listing titles.

toward:

Not "towards."

U

United States:

Spell out when used as proper noun in a sentence.

It is acceptable to use "U.S." with periods when used as part of a proper name, such as "U.S. Department of Education" when using "US" as a modifier. When using "US" as a modifier in body copy, don't use periods. For example, "Our goal is to increase wages for US child care workers."

W

web addresses:

Do not use http:// or www. Only use the proper website name, such as bankstreet.edu.

website:

One word, and "web" is lowercase.

well-prepared vs. well prepared:

When used as an adjective, use hyphens. For example, "well-prepared teachers." When it's a noun, no hyphens. "The teacher was well prepared."

Y

yearlong:

One word. "Yearlong" is correct, not "year-long" or "year long."