EDITORIAL
STYLE GUIDE

eCampus
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

INTRODUCTION

eCampus uses the [Associated Press (AP) Stylebook](#) as a guide for journalistic copy. If you are writing a news release about the University System of Georgia (USG) eCampus, let AP be your guide.

For marketing related writing, use the [Chicago Style Guide](#). For cases unique to USG eCampus and other exceptions to AP style, as well as matters not addressed by AP, use the USG eCampus Editorial Style Guide that follows.

Visit the [Graphics Standards Manual](#) for USG eCampus's graphic standards.

These guidelines are intended to help achieve consistency, but style can always change with usage or context. These rules are not set in concrete. They may be adapted—or even ignored—when necessary for clarity, accuracy, and precision.

If you find an error, have an update, or a suggestion for a new entry, send it by email to anclay@ecampus.usg.edu.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TOPICS

A

Abbreviations

Use full name on first reference of organizations, institutions, and companies. Abbreviation must be in parenthesis at first mention of the word being abbreviated. Use abbreviations on second and all other references.

Example: *Our offices are located at the University of West Georgia (UWG).*

Several of our team members are graduates of UWG.

Academic affairs

Generally, lowercase unless used as a title or department, such as Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Academic courses

Capitalize main words in titles of specific courses but not when used in a general sense.

Example: *Human Communication 1100 or communications course*

Academic degrees

No apostrophe in Bachelor of Science or Master of Arts. But use apostrophes for associate's degree, bachelor's degree, and master's degree. (USG style)

Adviser/Advisor

Advisor and adviser share the same definition and only vary by their spelling. The spelling 'advisor' is preferred.

Alma mater

Use capital letters for the song only. When referring to the college a person attended, use lowercase.

Example: *Valdosta State University is her alma mater.*

Ampersand

Do not use unless part of an official title.

Example: *College of Science & Mathematics*

And/Or

Avoid using in text.

Incorrect: *The student will likely be admitted due to his high test scores and/or his references.*

Better: *The student will likely be admitted due to his high test scores, his references, or both.*

B

Boldface type

Avoid in textual material, unless extreme emphasis or clarification is needed. It is appropriate for sub-heads.

Poor: *She was **excited** to have earned the **top grades** in her class.*

Preferred: *She was excited to have earned the top grades in her class.*

Example of proper use for emphasis: *I **only** gave her three roses.*

Board of Regents

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia is located in Atlanta. Capitalize for formal use. One may use lowercase for second reference, or simply "regents."

Bullet points

Vertical lists using bullet points help the reader to more quickly comprehend the materials. Use consistency in verb forms and tenses. Only use periods with complete sentences, and if using sentences, use them throughout the bulleted list. Always capitalize the first word of a sentence or phrase in a bullet point.

Boilerplate copy

[USG eCampus](#) is a service unit of the University System of Georgia that assists SACSCOC-accredited USG institutions in administering quality, affordable, high-demand, post-secondary online degrees and credentials that address the workplace needs of Georgia and beyond. We leverage resources to imagine, design, and support affordable higher education pathways to enhance the economic, cultural, and social interests of the people of Georgia. Our vision is for Georgia to be the most highly educated state in America, with graduates who utilize their knowledge and skills to make Georgia the most desirable place to live.

C

Campuswide

No hyphen. (USG style)

Chair

Use instead of chairman or chairwoman. She is the chair of the English department.

Chancellor

Lowercase unless appearing before a name.

Example: *The chancellor visited on Wednesday.*

Chancellor Sonny Perdue supported the new initiative.

Classification, student

Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate, etc.

Example: *As a freshman, he joined several clubs.*

Commas

Use of the Oxford comma is encouraged. Above all, consistency is paramount. The use, or lack thereof, of the Oxford comma must be maintained throughout a document.

Example: *Our plans for next year include replacing the roof of the Murphy Building, installing an escalator, and replacing the nickel door knobs with brass ones.*

Commencement

Generally lowercase unless used to refer to a specific event.

Do not use "commencement ceremony"—it is redundant.

Example: *She will be the speaker at the next commencement.*

The speaker at the 2021 Summer Commencement was Ian Smith.

Committees

Capitalize formal names of committees. Use lowercase letters when referring to committees informally.

Example: *The USG eCampus Data Committee will not meet this month.*

The committee did not meet last month.

Composition titles

For websites, articles, and social media, use italics for titles of books, plays, movies, collections, and TV series. For individual stories, poems, and episodes, use "quotation marks." For scholarly writing, use APA style.

Conferences

Use initial caps, and do not use quotation marks.

Example: *The Distance Learning Administration Conference will be held in late July.*

Contractions

Avoid the use of contractions in public-facing material when possible.

Correct: *You will not be able to register until you complete orientation.*

Avoid: *You won't be able to register until you complete orientation.*

Core Curriculum

Capitalize both words when used together. It is the same as the General Education Curriculum. Across all USG institutions, it consists of 42 hours of coursework in Areas A - E and 18 hours in Area F (field of study), totaling 60 hours.

Example: *She was able to complete much of the Core Curriculum through USG eCore.*

Course load

Two words.

Example: *She took a smaller course load over the summer.*

Credit for Prior Learning

May be abbreviated on second reference (CPL).

Credit hours

Use numerals (do not spell the number). Refer to hours as credit hours, not semester hours.

Example: *3-credit-hour course.*

12 credit hours.

Course names

See at bottom of Style Guide.

D

Dates

If using only a month and a year, do not separate with commas. Use commas when including the numerical date, and abbreviate any month with more than five letters.

Example: *He graduated in December 2023.*

She retired on September 30, 2023, after 20 years of service. (USG style)

Dean

Not capitalized unless used as a title.

Example: *The dean of USG eCampus gave his opinion on the matter.*

Dean Huett met with the president.

Dean's list

Use lower case.

Example: *Four of the students were on the dean's list.*

Jane Smith, who has been on the president's list every semester, has taken six USG eCore courses.

Degrees, eMajor.

Associate of Science in Financial Technology

Bachelor of Business Administration

Bachelor of Information Technology

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership

Departments

Should be lowercase.

Example: *The department of history has hired three new instructors.*

Disability

Guidance changed in 2021. While referring to a "person with disabilities" was considered correct for many years, it has now become controversial. Avoid mentioning disabilities unless relevant. If relevant, try to ask the individual for their preference in how they will be referenced. For full details, see the National Center on Disabilities and Journalism.

Disciplines

Do not capitalize unless proper nouns.

Example: *She enjoyed her math classes more than she did her English classes.*

DLA

Distance Learning Administration Conference. Held annually in Jekyll Island, Georgia.

May be abbreviated as DLA.

Dr.

The use of Dr. is appropriate in academia for a doctor of any kind, including Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., etc. Note that this is an exception to AP styles.

Example: *Dr. Sarah Kuck will lead the session.*

Dual Enrollment

Capitalize both words.

Example: *She was able to complete a year of college when she participated in the Dual Enrollment program.*

E

E.g.

Avoid. Use "for example," instead.

Exclamation mark

Use sparingly or avoid.

F

Factbook

For the eCore or eMajor factbook, use one word not two. Capitalized when referred to as the USG eCore/eMajor Factbook.

Example: *The eCore Factbook is ready to print.*

Were you able to make the edits to the factbook today?

Fiscal year

Use fiscal year (FY) on first reference and FY with the number afterwards. FY and the number should include a space between them.

Example: *The USG's fiscal year (FY) 2019 ran from July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019.*

We will see a decrease of $1 million in FY 25.

Floors

Do not capitalize the word "floor." Spell out numbers under 10, unless using a mailing address.

Example: *The meeting will be on the second floor of the Murphy Building.*

800 Rome Ave., 3rd floor.

Freshman

A student with 30 or fewer hours. A first-year student. Not capitalized.

Example: *Every freshman should have a mentor.*

G

Georgia towns

Follow the name of town by state. Exceptions are Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah.

Example: *The University of North Georgia is located in Dahlonega, Georgia.*

The meeting will be held in Savannah.

GoVIEW

Georgia Online Virtual Classroom Enterprise Wide. Refers to the USG's learning management system. May be abbreviated as GoVIEW on any reference.

Government divisions and offices

No capitalization for federal, state, or local departments, divisions, programs, etc. unless it is part of the formal name.

Example: *The USG eCampus Academic Affairs division handles grade appeals. Dr. Kelly Steed is the head of eCore academic affairs.*

Exception: *Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.* (USG style)

Governor

Use abbreviation before the name only.

Example: *Gov. Brian Kemp wanted to lower taxes.*

The governor was accompanied by Rep. John Sims at the ceremony.

GPA, grade point average

Can use GPA on first reference if referring to a number. Students will need a minimum GPA of 2.5 to maintain eligibility.

H

Hyphens

Do not surround hyphens with spaces. Connect directly to text.

Example: *2024-2025*

I

In-state, out-of-state

These are not capitalized. May use Georgia resident or Georgia non-resident.

Example: *Alabama students are able to pay in-state tuition at Dalton State College.*

Interim

Do not capitalize, even when preceding a name.

Example: *We invited interim President Jennifer Smith to the grand opening.*

Internet

Not capitalized. Similar words, such as web and website are also not capitalized unless at beginning of a sentence. (USG style) World Wide Web is capitalized.

Example: *She didn't turn in her work on time because she was unable to access the internet from Siberia.*

L

Login

Log in is used as a verb. Login is used as a noun.

Example: *Make sure that you know your eCore login.*

It is important to log in to your class every day.

M

Major, minor

Do not capitalize with the exception of languages, such as English.

Preferred use is "a student majoring in . . ."

Example: *His major was criminal justice.*

Better: *He was a junior majoring in criminal justice.*

Example for languages: *She was a senior majoring in English.*

Margins

Use ragged right margins.

Metro Atlanta

Not a proper noun. Do not hyphenate and do not use "metro area."

Example: *Georgia State University is one of several institutions in metro Atlanta.*

Midterm

One word.

N

Numbers

Spell out numbers one through nine. Use numerals for numbers over 10. May spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence.

Example: *I counted 28 people in the room.*

Twenty-eight of my students dropped the course.

There were only three people on the waiting list.

O

OJDLA

Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration. Quarterly peer-reviewed educational online publication. May be abbreviated if the audience is familiar with the journal.

Online

When referring to online classes or online learning, do not use a hyphen.

Example: *She prefers online classes.*

On-site, offsite

On-site uses a hyphen. Offsite does not.

Organizational Leadership

Refer to in full on first use with abbreviation, then may be abbreviated.

Example: *The Online BS in Organizational Leadership (ORGL) program will focus on the practices, theories, issues, parameters, and specific ramifications of organizational leadership. Students in the ORGL program are able to select a concentration in one of the following areas . . .*

P

Paragraphs

Break up paragraphs, avoiding large, dense blocks of text. Utilize subheadings when possible. An ideal paragraph length is 150 words or less and three to eight sentences. Avoid going over 250 words. Use ragged right margins. (Federal Plain Language Guidelines) Also see "spacing (paragraphs)."

Passive construction

Avoid. Use active sentence construction for clarity.

Example: *The trustees recognized Dr. Kuck.*

Avoid: *Dr. Kuck was recognized by the trustees.*

Phone numbers

Use 404-555-0678 instead of (404) 555-0678.

Plain language

Use simple language, avoiding filler and sentences that are longer than 20 words. Use active voice. Be concise, editing to eliminate unnecessary words. Address a single reader, not all readers.

Preferred: *You will turn in the form to your advisor.*

Avoid: *Students should turn in their forms to their advisors.*

Preferred: *Be sure that you have enough hours.*

Avoid: *Be sure that you have a sufficient number of hours.*

Professor

The title of professor should be reserved for those who have earned the academic distinction of assistant, associate, or full professor.

Purpose statement

Following below is the USG eCampus purpose statement:

As a service unit of the University System of Georgia, we facilitate the development and delivery of high-quality, affordable, and accessible online learning experiences while supporting strategic system-level initiatives to enrich students' lives and enhance the economic, cultural, and social interests of Georgians.

R

Rankings

When referring to rankings, use the abbreviation "No." Do not use the hashtag # except in social media references.

Example: *Georgia Southern University is ranked the No. 1 most innovative university in Georgia*

Regions

If referring to a specific area, capitalize. Otherwise, do not capitalize.

Example: *There are many job opportunities in South Georgia.*

Carrollton is in western Georgia.

Room numbers

Capitalize the word "room" when using it with room numbers.

Example: *Mr. Jones is located in Room 212 of the Murphy Building.* (USG style)

S

SACSCOC

Not SACS or SACS-COC. Regional accreditation body. May be abbreviated.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Seasons

Capitalize only when used to refer to a semester or event.

Example: *He plans to start college in the fall.*

The course was first offered in fall 2022.

The Fall Festival was cancelled.

She graduates in Fall semester 2026.

Sentence length

Keep to 15-20 words for best plain language practices. Try to include only one idea in a sentence. (Federal Plain Language Guidelines)

Spacing (paragraphs)

For general articles, press releases, and professional communications, the default is AP Style using single spacing, with double spacing between paragraphs. Do not indent paragraphs. Double space bullet points. Other materials, such as presentation, flyers, advertisements, and memes may follow normal graphic conventions. Sentences begin with one singular space between the first word and the previous ending punctuation.

SST

eCampus's Student Success Team (SST). May be abbreviated. Assist in various tactics to ensure student success.

State of Georgia

Capitalize when referring to the government but not the state.

Example: *The flu season was particularly tough in the state of Georgia.*

He is the governor of the State of Georgia.

Slash

Do not use spaces before or after the slash except when using longer, complex, or compound phrases (Chicago Manual, The Canadian Style)

Example: *eCore/eMajor vs. eCore / eMajor*

eCampus Marketing / Recruiting Services vs. eCampus Marketing/Recruiting Services

Social Media Platforms

Following is a list of the eCampus social media platforms:

[eCore Youtube](#)

[eMajor Youtube](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Planet eCampus Blog](#)

[Pinterest](#)

[X (formely Twitter)](#)

Streets

Only use abbreviations when using a numbered address.

Example: *The university is located on Maple Street.*

The campus is located at 1332 Southern Dr.

T

Tense

Use present tense when possible for plain language.

T-shirt

Do not use tee-shirt.

Example: *All attendees will receive a t-shirt.*

Time frames

General suggestion is to use periods for a.m. and p.m. with lowercase letters but eCampus allows for discretion based on the look and feel of a document. For a duration, use a hyphen or en dash between start times and end times. If an event is only in the morning or afternoon hours, use a.m. or p.m. only after the last reference.

Example: *9 – 9:45 a.m.*
Keynote Address
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Lunch Break

U

University

Lowercase when it stands alone. Capitalize when referring to the full name of an institution.

Example: *She spent five years at the university before earning her degree.*

She previously attended the University of West Georgia.

University System of Georgia

Should be capitalized. May use abbreviation (USG) after first reference. Do not use University System or System (from USG style guide). Includes state colleges, universities, Georgia Archives, and Georgia Public Library System.

Example: *The University System of Georgia has more than 300,000 students. As the sixth largest university system in the United States, the USG was created in 1931.*

USG eCampus

eCampus should not stand alone but should always follow 'The University System of Georgia' or 'USG'.

Incorrect: *The eCampus staff members are presenting on the topic.*

Better: *The USG eCampus team will visit Kennesaw State University on Monday.*

USG eCore

eCore eCampus should not stand alone but should always follow 'The University System of Georgia' or 'USG'.

Incorrect: *A new eCore course is now available for student registration.*

Better: *The USG eCore team is traveling to Savannah today.*

USG eCore RAC

Use USG eCore Regents' Advisory Committee (RAC) on first reference. Then use USG eCore RAC.

USG eMajor

eMajor eCampus should not stand alone but should always follow 'The University System of Georgia' or 'USG'.

Incorrect: *There are four new eMajor affiliates.*

Example: *He has taught several courses for USG eMajor.*

USG FreeCampus

Precede with USG on first reference only.

Example: *A record-breaking number of students enrolled this semester in USG FreeCampus.*

V

Values

USG eCampus operates under a set of five values:

Service: Our core value. We provide exemplary service to students, faculty, partner institutions, and
other stakeholders.

Student-Focused: We guide students toward academic and lifelong success through personalized engagement and support.

Collaboration: We foster meaningful connections to develop high-impact educational experiences and practices.

Community: We are stronger together, and we support each other's well-being, engagement, and success.

Continuous Improvement: We ensure excellence and drive innovation through data-driven decision-making.

W

Web addresses

Do not use http or www.

Example: *ecampus.usg.edu*

Well-being

Always hyphenate.

Example: *His advisor is concerned about her well-being.*

Y

Years

Use complete figures for a span of years. 2024-2025, not 2024-25.

Selected References

University System of Georgia Style Guide

Federal Plain Language Guidelines

APPENDIX A
Affiliate Institutions & Abbreviations

Updated Feb. 2024

ABAC	Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	eCore / eMajor
ASU	Albany State University	eCore / eMajor
AMSC	Atlanta Metropolitan State College	eCore / eMajor
CSU or Clayton State	Clayton State University	eCore / eMajor
CCG	College of Coastal Georgia	eCore / eMajor
CSU	Columbus State University	eCore / eMajor
DSC	Dalton State College	eCore / eMajor
EGSC	East Georgia State College	eCore / eMajor
FVSU	Fort Valley State University	eCore / eMajor
GCSU	Georgia College and State University	eMajor
GGC	Georgia Gwinnett College	eCore / eMajor
GHC	Georgia Highlands College	eCore / eMajor
GS	Georgia Southern University (**GSOU** eCampus Internal Use Only)	eCore / eMajor
GSW	Georgia Southwestern State University	eCore / eMajor
GSU	Georgia State University	eMajor
GSC	Gordon State College	eCore / eMajor
KSU	Kennesaw State University	eCore / eMajor
MGA	Middle Georgia State University	eCore / eMajor
SSU	Savannah State University	eCore / eMajor
SGSC	South Georgia State College	eCore / eMajor
UNG	University of North Georgia	eCore / eMajor
UWG	University of West Georgia	eCore / eMajor
VSU	Valdosta State University	eCore / eMajor

APPENDIX B

eCore Courses Offered

Updated Feb. 2024

All course names are hyperlinked to their corresponding eCore page.

Business

ECON 2105   Principles of Macroeconomics

ECON 2106   Principles of Microeconomics

Communication

COMM 1100   Human Communication

English

ENGL 2131   American Literature I

ENGL 2132   American Literature II

ENGL 1101   English Composition I

ENGL 1102   English Composition II

ENGL 2111   World Literature I

ENGL 2112   World Literature II

Fine Arts

ARTS 1100   Art Appreciation

MUSC 1100   Music Appreciation

THEA 1100   Theatre Appreciation

Government

POLS 1101   American Government

History

HIST 2111   United States History I

HIST 2112   United States History II

HIST 1111   World History I

HIST 1112   World History II

Math

MATH 1111	College Algebra
MATH 1501	Calculus I
MATH 1401	Elementary Statistics
MATH 1101	Introduction to Mathematical Modeling
MATH 1113	Precalculus
MATH 1001	Quantitative Reasoning

Philosophy

PHIL 2010	Introduction to Philosophy

Psychology

PSYC 1101	Introduction to General Psychology

Science

CSCI 1301K	Computer Science I
ENVS 2202	Environmental Science
BIOL 1011K	Introductory Biology and LAB
BIOL 1012K	Introductory Biology II and LAB
DATA 1501	Introduction to Data Science
GEOL 1121K	Introductory Geosciences I and LAB
CHEM 1211K	Principles of Chemistry I and LAB
CHEM 1212K	Principles of Chemistry II and LAB
PHYS 2211K	Principles of Physics I and LAB
PHYS 2212K	Principles of Physics II and LAB

Spanish

SPAN 2001	Intermediate Spanish I
SPAN 2002	Intermediate Spanish II

Sociology

SOCI 1101	Introduction to Sociology

FreeCampus

- ▷ [Anatomy & Physiology Prep](#)
- ▷ [College Foundations for English Composition](#)
- ▷ [College Math Foundations](#)
- ▷ [Elementary French I Refresher Course](#)
- ▷ [Elementary Spanish I Refresher Course](#)
- ▷ [Essential Study Skills for College Success](#)
- ▷ [Fundamentals of Pathophysiology](#)
- ▷ [Guitar for Beginners](#)
- ▷ [Introductory Business Law](#)
- ▷ [Introduction to Financial Technology (FinTech)](#)
- ▷ [Introduction to Marketing](#)
- ▷ [Library Instruction: Information Literacy](#)
- ▷ [Macroeconomics](#)
- ▷ [Medical Mathematics](#)
- ▷ [Medical Terminology](#)

APPENDIX C

eMajor Programs Offered

Updated Feb. 2024

All programs are linked to their corresponding eMajor page.

Business Administration

- ▷ [Bachelor of Business Administration](#)
- ▷ [Entrepreneurship Certificate](#)

Criminal Justice

- ▷ [Bachelor of Criminal Justice](#)
  - ▶ [Law Enforcement Concentration](#)
  - ▶ [Social Justice Concentration](#)

Financial Technology

- ▷ [Undergraduate Certificate in FinTech](#)
- ▷ [Associate of Science in FinTech](#)
- ▷ [Digital Payments](#)
- ▷ [Data Analytics & Visualization](#)
- ▷ [FinTech Core Courses](#)

Information Technology

- ▷ [Bachelor of Information Technology](#)

Organizational Leadership

- ▷ [Bachelor of Organizational Leadership](#)
  - ▶ [Healthcare Administration](#)
  - ▶ [Office Administration Technology](#)
  - ▶ [Public Service](#)
  - ▶ [Social Justice](#)

Nursing

- ▷ [RN to BSN](#)
- ▷ [Collaborative Courses](#)

Workplace Interpersonal Relationships

- ▷ [Workplace Interpersonal Relationships Courses](#)

APPENDIX D
Accessibility Services

If a student has an accessibility issue, or suspects that he/she has an accessibility issue, and would like to be considered for accommodations, there are several options. Each USG institution has an office of accessibility services, and the campus eMajor Liaison can provide information regarding the office on each home campus. Visit the [USG eMajor Institutions](#) page to access the accessibility office at your school. Students should contact the accessibility services coordinator at their home institution to discuss the documentation and process required for special accommodations.