

# APSU Style Guide

**academic courses** – Capitalize formal course titles: *English 1010, Mass Media Law*. Do not capitalize a field of study unless it's a proper noun: *Austin Peay's general education curriculum includes English, biology, and American history*.

**academic degrees** – Avoid abbreviations like *B.A.* and *PhD.*, and instead use phrasing such as: *Fatima Kader, who has a doctorate in psychology*.

Abbreviations can be used when identifying too many individuals by degree on first reference would make a sentence too complex. These should only be used after a full name and offset with a comma: *John Snow, Ph.D., spoke*.

Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree, a master's*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts* or *Master of Science*. Also: *an associate degree* (no possessive).

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.

**academic colleges and departments** – Capitalize the full names of university colleges, schools, departments, and divisions: *College of Graduate Studies, School of Nursing, Department of Biology, Division of Academic Affairs*. Lowercase these terms when not using them as part of a formal name: *The biology department, the nursing program*, etc.

**academic titles** – All faculty and staff members who hold doctoral degrees will be mentioned as *Dr.* on first reference, unlike the Associated Press Stylebook guidelines. On second reference, those individuals will be noted by last name only: *Dr. Joe Jones and Dr. Sue Smith attended the conference in New Orleans. Jones chaired the event, while Smith served as the university delegate*. Never abbreviate *professor*.

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *chancellor* and *chair* when used before someone's name and lowercase elsewhere.

**ACT** – Use only the initials when referring to the previously designated *American College Testing*.

**addresses** – Use the abbreviations *Ave.*, *Blvd.*, and *St.* only with a numbered address: *601 College St*. Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: *College Street*.

Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *Austin Peay is located near the intersection of Forbes and Robb avenues*.

All similar words (*alley, drive, road, terrace*, etc.) are always spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal street 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 for *10th* and above: *637 Eighth St., 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., 600 K St. NW*. Do not abbreviate if the number is omitted: *East 42nd Street, K Street Northwest*.

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

**Advanced Placement courses and exams** – Use *Advanced Placement* on first reference. *AP classes* and *AP exams* are acceptable on second reference.

**advisor** – Not *adviser*.

**alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae** – Use *alumnus* (*alumni* in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school. Use *alumna* (*alumnae* in the plural) when referring to a woman who has attended a school. Use *alum* (*alums* in the plural) when referring to a gender-neutral person who has attended a school. Use *alumni* when referring to a group of graduates that includes multiple genders.

**a.m., p.m.** – Lowercase with periods. Avoid redundant phrases like *10 a.m. this morning*.

**Austin Peay State University** – Use the full name on first reference: *Austin Peay State University*. On second reference, *Austin Peay* is an acceptable abbreviation, but *AP* is not. *APSU* may be used when limited space is available (such as in ad copy or flyers) or if the acronym has been established on first reference: *Austin Peay State University (APSU)*. For internal communications, *APSU* is acceptable on all references.

**buildings** – Capitalize the proper names of buildings: *Browning Building, Morgan University Center, Harvill Hall, Dunn Center*. Abbreviate on second reference depending on spacing and the intended audience: *Morgan University Center (MUC)* on first reference, *MUC* on second reference.

Shorten extended titles when communicating with internal audiences and use the full formal title on first reference when communicating with external audiences: *Felix G. Woodward Library* on first reference with external audiences, *Woodward Library* on all references with internal audiences and second/further references with external audiences.

**capitalization** – Avoid unnecessary capitalization – use a capital letter if called for in a rule in this stylebook or the Associated Press Stylebook.

**chairs** – Use “chair” in all instances to refer to an individual who leads one of the university’s academic departments, regardless of gender: *Dr. Joe Jones is chair of the biology department; Dr. Sue Smith is chair of the chemistry department*.

**class standings** – Lowercase *freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior*. Do not abbreviate.

**class of** – Capitalize “class” in constructions such as *Class of 1949* or *Centennial Class*. Apostrophe use is acceptable: *Class of '49*. When communicating with internal audiences, parentheses can also be used: *John Smith ('49)*.

**composition titles** – Italicize the names of books, movies, plays, poems, albums, songs, operas, radio and television programs, lectures, speeches, magazines, and works of art.

**dates** – Always use Arabic figures without *st, nd, rd, or th*: *Wednesday, March 20*.

**dean** – Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *Dean John Jones, Deans John Jones and Susan Smith*. Lowercase in other uses: *John Jones, dean of the college; the dean*.

**dean’s list** – Lowercase in all uses: *He is on the dean’s list. She is a dean’s list student*.

**emeritus** – This word is often added to formal titles to denote that individuals who have retired retain their rank or title.

When used, place *emeritus* after the formal title, in keeping with the general practice of academic institutions: *Professor Emeritus Samuel Eliot Morison, Dean Emeritus Ashanti Washington*. Or: *Samuel Eliot Morison, professor emeritus of history; Ashanti Washington, dean emeritus*.

**Fort Campbell Center** – Use *the Austin Peay Center at Fort Campbell*. Do not use phrases like *main, secondary* or *satellite campus* to distinguish the Austin Peay Center at Fort Campbell and the Clarksville campus. This avoids indicating that one campus is more important than another.

**governor** – Capitalize and abbreviate as *Gov.* or *Govs.* when used as a formal title for a public official before one or more names.

**Governors/Govs** – Austin Peay’s mascot is plural: *the Governors* or *the Govs* in abbreviated form. In most instances, these phrases are not possessive: *Governors Terrace, Govs ID Card*. Plural possessive of the mascot – *the Governors’ or Govs’* – should rarely be used.

**GPA** – Acceptable in all references for *grade-point average*.

**healthcare** – One word, no hyphen.

**holidays** – Capitalize the names of holidays, including federal observances: *New Year’s Day, Groundhog Day, Easter, Hannukah*, etc. Lowercase generic phrases that refer specifically to Austin Peay’s administrative closures: *spring holiday, winter break*.

**honorary degrees** – All references to honorary degrees should specify that the degree was honorary. Do not use *Dr.* before the name of an individual whose only doctorate is honorary.

**legislative titles** – Use *Rep., Reps., Sen., and Sens.* as formal titles before one or more names. Spell out and lowercase *representative* and *senator* in other uses.

Spell out other legislative titles in all uses. Capitalize formal titles like *chair, city councilor, delegate*, etc., when used before a name, and lowercase in other uses.

**military titles** – Use military ranks in front of an individual’s name on first reference, abbreviated as recommended by the AP Stylebook. Use the individual’s last name only on second or further references. *Retired* should be used as follows: *They invited retired Army Gen. John Brown*. Never use *Col. (Ret)* or other forms commonly used in military correspondence.

**months** – Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.* Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone.

**offices** – Capitalize when “office” is part of an official title: *Office of Admissions, Office of Undergraduate Research*. Lowercase when used informally: *admissions office, undergraduate research office*.

**parking lots** – Capitalize “Lot” in reference to any of Austin Peay’s numbered parking lots: *\_Lot 42, Lot 7A.\_* Lowercase in other uses.

**professor** – Do not abbreviate. Lowercase before a name, but capitalize *Professor Emeritus* as a conferred title before a name.

**punctuation** – In general, follow the Associated Press Stylebook guidelines. However, a comma should be used before the conjunction in most series: *His grandchildren are*

*Vera, Chuck, and Dave.*

**residence hall** – Always use the building’s formal name on first reference and *residence hall* on second reference. Never use *dorm*.

**resident advisor** – Not *adviser*. Acceptable on second reference: *RA*.

**room numbers** – Use phrases like *Morgan University Center 312* and *Kimbrough Building 119* to denote specific locations within a building on campus. Include and capitalize *room* when communicating with external audiences: *Morgan University Center Room 312*.

**SAT** – Use only the initials in reference to the previously designated Scholastic Aptitude Test or the Scholastic Assessment Test: *The students scored above average on the SAT*.

**semesters** – Lowercase *semester* in general uses: *spring semester, fall semester*. Capitalize the season when used alongside a year: *Fall 2024, Spring 2025*.

**syllabus, syllabuses** – Not *syllabi*.

**telephone numbers** – Use figures with hyphens: *931-221-7011*. If extension numbers are needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension: *931-221-7011, ext. 2*.

**times** – Use figures except for *noon* and *midnight*. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 9-11 a.m., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

**titles** – In general, only capitalize formal titles when used directly before an individual’s name. Lowercase and spell out titles in other uses.

**university** - Capitalize when used as part of a formal name. Lowercase in all other uses, including phrases like “the university” that refer directly to Austin Peay.

**university activities** – Capitalize the names of all formal campus activities: *Homecoming, Gobs Preview Day, Fall Commencement*.

**years** – In general, when a phrase refers to a month and day within the current year, do not include the year: *Graduation is scheduled for May 3*. However, the year can be included in promotional designs for events such as lectures, recitals, and symposiums since these materials are often preserved as keepsakes.