



STRATEGIC  
COMMUNICATIONS

# Mid Michigan College Editorial Guide

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## Introduction

This editorial guide is a tool to help communicators and brand champions across the College maintain standards for grammar, punctuation, and style in print and electronic materials featuring Mid Michigan College.

This guide covers items such as accepted naming conventions, abbreviations, titles, and more. Many items follow the Associated Press Stylebook guidelines, but Mid specific exceptions are also noted. These exceptions comprise Mid's own style and preferred way of communicating with our employees, students, and community members.

- **We simplify.** Mid is an organization with audiences that value authenticity, durability, and a straightforward attitude. Being overly wordy, including long lists or acronyms or titles, and overusing punctuation alienate our target audiences and are practices to avoid.
  - We say "use" not "utilize."
  - We refrain from using colons, extra spaces, and excessive exclamation points.
  - We refrain from overly complex sentence and paragraph structures.
- **We recognize.** Attention spans are growing shorter and shorter. The amount of available content expands further and further. Eliminating useless words such as extra ofs, thats, and whiches keeps it simple for readers. Phrases like as noted, see below, following are, according to, pictured is, and other state-the-obvious phrases are speed bumps that frustrate readers and should be avoided.
- **We are active.** Writing in the active voice keeps our meaning clear for readers, and our sentences from becoming too complicated or wordy.
  - Active: The College provides an exceptional and affordable education.
  - Passive: An exceptional an affordable education is provided by the College.

For spelling, style, and anything not mentioned in this editorial guide, refer to the appropriate stylebook, latest edition of Merriam-Webster College Dictionary, or contact Strategic Communications.

## Mid Michigan College Standard Language

### The College Name

- Use Mid Michigan College on first reference.
- Following mentions should use Mid or the College.
- **Do not use** 'MidMich', 'MMC', 'MID', 'Mid Michigan', 'Mid-Michigan College', or 'Mid-Michigan'.

This applies to all Mid Michigan College references including email, letters, forms, phone messages, signs, advertising, and apparel.

Capitalize 'College' when the word acts as a specific, direct reference to Mid Michigan College.

- The College offers a wide range of athletic opportunities, including eight varsity teams.

If you are writing about the value of a college degree or college in general, 'college' is not capitalized.

### College Athletics

Mid's team name is the Lakers. Mid's Mascot is Harry the Heron.

- Use Laker Athletics, **not** 'Lakers Athletics'.
- We are the Lakers. We belong to the Laker Family.
- I am proud to be a Laker. GO LAKERS!
- Men's Laker Basketball
- Women's Laker Basketball
- Men's Laker Bowling
- Women's Laker Bowling
- Men's Laker Cross Country
- Women's Laker Cross Country
- Laker Baseball
- Laker Softball
- **Do not use** 'Roll On Lakers'.

This applies to all Laker Athletics references including email, letters, forms, phone messages, signs, advertising, and apparel.

### Mid Michigan College Foundation

- Use Mid Michigan College Foundation on first reference.
- Following mentions should use Mid Foundation or the Foundation.
- **Do not use** 'Mid's Foundation', 'The Foundation', 'MID Foundation', 'MMC Foundation', 'Mid Michigan', 'Mid-Michigan College Foundation', or 'Mid-Michigan Foundation'.

This applies to all Mid Michigan College Foundation references including email, letters, forms, phone messages, signs, advertising, and apparel.

## Courses, Classes, Lions, Tigers, & Bears... OH MY!

### Badges

Badges are what students earn when completing training at Mid.

### Courses

Courses are credit bearing educational offerings at Mid.

Course titles are capitalized with or without course numbers.

- Human Anatomy & Physiology
- BIO 138, Human Anatomy & Physiology

### Classes

Classes are non-credit bearing trainings or lifelong learning offerings at Mid.

Classes can also be used in place of courses to refer to credit bearing offerings.

### Programs

Programs are subject areas in which the College offers at least one, but possibly multiple credentials, pathways, or concentrations. Programs include areas like automotive technology, nursing, accounting, etc.

### Pathways

Pathways are curated and recommended four-semester curricular plans that lead to a credential and align with the learning outcomes for its intended career or transfer destination/program.

### Degrees

Degrees are formal credentials awarded to students who achieve the degree's learning objectives, as demonstrated by successfully completing at least 60 credits (for associate degrees) or 120 credits (for bachelor's degrees). A degree is officially documented on students' records and their transcripts.

### Certificates

A certificate is a short-term, credit-bearing credential awarded to students who achieve its learning objectives, as demonstrated by successful completion of its required credits (not to exceed 18).

Certificate programs can be embedded in associate degrees or stand-alone programs. Receipt of a certificate is officially documented on students' records and their transcripts.

### Training Credentials

A training credential is a specialized, credit-bearing, short-term credential awarded to students who achieve its learning objectives, as demonstrated by successful completion of its required credits.

Training credential learning objectives are linked to career and/or professional expectations. Receipt of a training credential is officially documented on students' records and their transcripts.

### Training

Training is used to describe non-credit bearing Rapid-Training and Customized Training offerings at Mid. These offerings are not referred to as courses or classes.

## Instructor, Professor, or Faculty Member

As a general rule, individuals who teach courses or classes at Mid should be referred to as instructors, regardless of whether their instruction is in credit-bearing or non-credit coursework. Members of the instructional staff who are employed full time and teach credit-bearing courses should be referred to as faculty members whenever possible.

- Mid's instructors bring to life real-world examples and industry knowledge.
- Fiona Smith, Full Time Faculty Member at Mid Michigan College, engages students in hands-on activities.

## Abbreviations

Avoid use of abbreviations, except when they are parts of names, street addresses, courtesy titles, or academic degrees.

Although periods are used with some abbreviations, current trends in English are moving away from using them.

- CPA   SBE   GPA   USA

## Academic Degrees

- Abbreviate and capitalize academic degrees that follow the credential holder's name
  - Bachelor of Science, BS
    - John Williams, BS
  - Master of Science, MS
    - John Williams, MS
  - Doctor of Philosophy, PhD
    - John Williams, PhD
  - Master of Business Administration, MBA
    - John Williams, MBA
  - Bachelor of Science in Engineering, BSE
    - John Williams, BSE
  - Doctor of Education, EdD
    - John Williams, EdD
  - Master of Education, MEd or MAEd
    - John Williams, MEd
  - Doctor of Arts, DA
    - John Williams, DA

Abbreviations are also capitalized when used with the full, complete degree.

- BS in Mechanical Engineering
- PhD in Physics
- Dr. is for medical doctor and for those with a PhD.

## Ampersand

Ampersands (&) should only be used in titles, brand-specific words, or Twitter content.

## Divisions, Departments, & Offices

To maintain an approachable and down-to-earth style, the College's divisions, departments, and offices are not preceded by a level identifier.

- Use Financial Aid, **Do Not Use** the Office of Financial Aid
- Use Student Services, **Do Not Use** the Division of Student Services

## Highways

- US Highway 127, US-127
- Michigan Highway 61, M-61

## States

States are spelled out. Postal abbreviations (MI, etc.) are only used in address forms.

- She lives in Harrison, Michigan.

## Titles

Titles are abbreviated when preceding names.

- Dr.
- Mr.
- Ms.
- Mrs.
- Rev.
- Hon.

## United States

- US or USA. No periods are required, except when surrounding text is in all capital letters, then use U.S. for clarity.

## Quick Reference List

- etc. = et cetera
- i.e. = that is
- e.g. = for example
- Vice President = VP
- Associate Vice President and Assistant Vice President = AVP



## Buildings & Places

### Campus Locations

Mid Michigan College has two primary, physical locations, and also offers online courses.

- Harrison | Mt. Pleasant | Online
- Use Mt. Pleasant, **Do Not Use** 'Mt Pleasant', 'Mount Pleasant'.
- When referring to a specific campus, the name and word 'campus' should be capitalized. Capitalize 'campus' when the word substitutes a direct reference to a specific campus.
  - She is attending courses on the Harrison Campus.
  - Many events are taking place in Mt. Pleasant next week, and the Campus is hosting an art exhibition. (Events are only taking place on the Mt. Pleasant Campus.)
- When referring to campuses in general, the reference is not capitalized.
  - There are many events on campus this week. (Events are taking place on multiple campuses.)
- Campus Location Mailing Addresses
  - 1375 S. Clare Ave., Harrison, MI 48625
  - 2600 S. Summerton Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

### Campus Buildings

Listed below are appropriate names for various campus buildings. Shortened or abbreviated building names can often be used, but remember who your audience is and gauge their familiarity with the campus before using an abbreviated name.

- Harrison Campus
  - Student Orientation & Academic Readiness Center, SOAR Center
  - Center for Medical Imaging Studies
  - Technical Education Center, Tech Center
- Mt. Pleasant Campus
  - Herbert D. Doan Center for Science & Health Technologies, Doan Center, Doan
  - Center for Student Services, CSS
  - Center for Liberal Arts & Business, CLAB
  - Morey Technical Education Center, Morey Tech Center

### Campus Rooms

When referencing room locations, the word room is not required. Simply state the building location and room number.

- Harrison Campus
  - Harrison Campus 221
- Mt. Pleasant Campus
  - Doan 127
  - CSS Lobby
  - Community Room
  - CLAB 244
  - Morey 115

## Capitalization

### Academic Degrees

Capitalize academic degrees and disciplines in full, complete use. Abbreviations are also capitalized when used with the full, complete degree. When discussing degree levels in general terms they are not capitalized.

- He received his associate degree.
- She received an Associate in Arts in Graphic Design. Or substitute 'AA in Graphic Design.'
- She received her bachelor's degree.
- He received a Bachelor's of Science in Chemistry. Or substitute 'BS in Chemistry.'
- She received her master's degree.
- He received his Master of Science with a chemistry concentration. Or substitute 'MS with a chemistry concentration.'

### College Leadership, Boards, and Committees

Capitalize titles when used before a name.

- Board of Trustees first reference, 'the Board' on following references.
- President Christine Hammond.
- Dr. Christine Hammond, President of Mid Michigan College.
- College Shared Governance Committees should be capitalized.
- Dean Phillip Masterson or Phillip Masterson, Dean of Health Sciences

Do not capitalize titles if used in the general sense.

- He was appointed vice president.
- She has been hired as a full time faculty member.

### Commencement & Graduation

Graduation refers to earning a formal credential through successful completion of its coursework. Students do this at various times throughout the year depending on program requirements. 'Graduation' should not be capitalized.

Commencement is the ceremony held for those who have completed formal credentials. 'Commencement' should be capitalized.

### Divisions, Departments, & Offices

Divisions, departments, and offices within the College are capitalized when specifically referenced.

- Contact Financial Aid.
- Many Mid students receive financial aid.

### Headlines

Capitalize headlines, but not articles, prepositions, or to-be verbs.

- PTK Students Recognized
- Student Artwork Featured in Local Festival of Banners

## Titles of Works

Italicize the titles of books, plays, motion pictures, oratorios or operas, magazines, published documents, newspapers, periodicals, television series, and journals.

- *The New Yorker*
- *Field of Dreams*
- *The Simpsons*
- *Connections*

## Quick Reference List

- Email
  - email
  - midmich email
- PO Box
- Social Security Number, SSN
- URLs
  - Don't use "http://www." unless necessary for functionality.
  - Use midmich.edu, **do not use** 'www.midmich.edu'
- Zipcode or zipcode, **do not use** 'ZIP Code'

## Dates, Times, & Numbers

### Dates

Spell out dates and include the day of the week for informational purposes. The year is not required, but can be included for additional clarification.

- Wednesday, January 23, **do not use** 'January 23<sup>rd</sup>' or '1/23/08'

### Time

Time designators should be written in lower case, without periods. Times on the hour should be written as the hour alone, without the colon 00 (:00).

- 9pm, Saturday, April 28
- 9pm, **do not use** '9 p.m.', '9:00 p.m.', '9p.m.'
- 9am – 3pm
- 9:30am – 3pm
- 9am – 3:30pm
- 9am – 11am

### Numbers

- Zero to nine are always spelled out.
- 10 and up are written as numerals except at the start of a sentence or in headlines.
- Numbers of more than three figures are pointed off with commas, except SAT scores.
  - 1,259 women
  - \$4,700,900
  - 1220 SAT

## Credit Hours

Use numerals when referring to credit hours.

- 6 credits

## Percent, Percentage

Using the word percent or the % symbol are both acceptable. A numeral is used before the word percent or % symbol, unless it comes at the beginning of a sentence. Percent refers to an exact number.

- Thirty percent of their wages went to taxes.
- The power play is running at 25 percent.

Percentage is used when there is no exact number.

- The percentage of their salaries that went to taxes was significant.

## Telephone Numbers

Use domestic formatting for telephone numbers.

- 1 (800) 386-6622
- (989) 386-6622

When referencing an extension use this format

- (989) 386-6622 x579

## Punctuation

Punctuation following *italics*, **bold**, etc., should be the same style.

### Accents

- a là uses the accent under the “tilde” (~), in the upper left-hand corner of the keyboard
- résumé uses Option+e (for Macs) and Control+e (for PCs)

### Apostrophes

- In words showing joint possession, only the last word takes the possessive form.
  - secretary-treasurer's report
  - Abbot and Company's product
  - Mike and Julie's child
- When two or more persons possess something individually, each of their names takes the possessive form.
  - the buyer's and seller's signatures
  - the dean's and the instructors' offices
- Use an apostrophe to denote a contraction or omission of letters.
  - it is becomes it's
- Use the apostrophe to form the plural of lowercase letters and symbols. It's not necessary for capital letters and numbers, including years.
  - p's and q's
  - As and Bs (grades)
  - IOUs
  - during the 1970s
- When a word ends with s, only add an apostrophe to the end to make it possessive.
  - Havens' not havens's
  - Its (possessive) not it's.

### Bulleted Lists

- Depending on design, capitalization and punctuation of bulleted lists can vary, but be sure to maintain consistency.

### Colon

- In lists, use a colon if the introductory statement is an independent clause.
  - There are many summer courses available:
    - Accounting
    - Thermodynamics
    - Calculus
- If the introductory statement is not an independent clause, do not use the colon.
  - The fellows are
    - experts in their field
    - in demand across the nation
    - full of important information

## Comma, Serial Comma

- Harrison, Michigan
- Wednesday, July 14, 2018
- In 1965, Mid was founded in the local community.
- Using a comma in introductory phrases is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on length, need for a pause, etc.
- Mid Michigan College uses the serial comma.
  - The Lakers defeated Mott, Kirtland, and Grand Rapids, **not** The Lakers defeated Mott, Kirtland and Grand Rapids.

## Ellipses

Use three with a space following after.

- We had to show the way... that was the end of the conversation.
- The meeting was just okay... the bitterness faded slowly.
- The beginning... is the end.

## Em Dash

- Do not use spaces on either side of the em dash.
- On Windows, Alt+0151 or Ctrl+Alt+minus; on a Mac Option+Shift+hyphen
- Use an em dash, also referred to as the dash, to precede a reference to an author following a direct quotation.
  - "I am simply a human being, more or less."—Saul Bellow, Herzog (1964)
- Use em dashes to set off clauses that are logically and structurally independent, also for amplifying or explaining.
  - Tonight's program—a program that has won national acclaim—is underwritten...
  - He had a plan to win the game—a plan he hoped would work.

## Hyphen

- For hyphenated compounds in titles, capitalize only the first element unless the second element is a proper noun or adjective.
  - Death-defying Feats by Nineteenth-century Tightrope Walkers
  - An All-American Girl: How a Non-English-speaking Immigrant Made Good
- Do not capitalize the second element if modifying the first element or both elements constitute a single word.
  - 20th-century literature
  - English-speaking people
  - first-year student
- When used as an adjective in a title, the number following the hyphen is lowercase.
  - Twenty-third Conference on Sludge
  - Twenty-first Century Literature
- Hyphenate adjectival phrases formed of two or more words preceding the nouns modified where ambiguity might result.
  - well-known woman
  - first-class act

- joint-stock company
- matter-of-course attitude
- solid-state circuit
- land-use legislation
- cross-cultural education
- steady-state research
- decision-making body
- full-semester course
- Use a hyphen when the meaning varies with the absence of a hyphen.
  - re-cover and recover
  - re-create and recreate
- Hyphenate when the first vowel of the added word would suggest mispronunciation.
  - pro-ally
  - demi-equitant
  - ante-urban
- Do not hyphenate adjectives formed of two proper names having their own fixed meaning.
  - Old Testament times
  - New York subways
- Use when necessary for clarity.
  - more-rigorous academics (academics that are more rigorous)
  - more rigorous academics (greater quantity of rigorous academics)
- Several words are hyphenated when they are used as an adjective, but open when used as a noun.
  - decision-making skills, good at decision making
  - critical-thinking pattern, it required critical thinking
  - cutting-edge design, the design was cutting edge
  - full-time, full time
  - man-made, man made
  - on-site, on site
  - problem-solving, problem solving
- Do not hyphenate -ly words, combinations of adverb and adjective, or adverb and participle unless ambiguity would result.
  - highly developed areas
  - the fallen tree blocked the road
- Compounds of non-words ordinarily do not require a hyphen, except when used with a proper noun. Consult Merriam-Webster's Dictionary; if the compound does not appear there, use a hyphen.
  - non-alumni
  - non-civil engineering
  - nondegree-seeking student

## Spaces

Use only single spaces after the period; avoid double spaces.

## Quick Reference List

- bi-weekly
- co-author
- co-curricular
- postwar
- co-worker
- \$122 million contract
- 3D printing
- birth date
- co-edited
- state-of-the-art
- cross country
- cross-cultural
- database
- e-learning
- e-newsletters
- ever-changing
- hands-on, real-world experience
- long-term
- online
- postdoc
- start-up (noun), start up (verb)
- Early College
- Dual Enrollment
- weeklong
- Wi-Fi