

Oberlin Style Guide Cheat Sheet

Words to use/Usage to avoid

As best we can, we try to:

- Use gender-neutral terms
- Lowercase when possible
- Use closed co-compound words (co-, multi-, pre- post-, -wide
 - coauthor, multiethnic, precollege, postdoctorate, citywide, campuswide, etc.
- Hyphenate sparingly; close up prefixes unless they would otherwise confuse readers
- No periods in academic degrees (BA, MA, PhD, BMus, MME, ...)
- Capitalize course titles
- Do not capitalize name of college, institution, program, etc., unless using the official formal name; lower case on second and subsequent references, informal usage, if standing alone

Generic academic

advisor not adviser

catalog

cocurricular

coursework

don't use e-mail as a verb; can stand alone in tabular format

no courtesy titles (other than obituaries)

- no Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms.; Dr. is for medical doctors
- use person's last name on second reference

Alumni

Alumni Association

alum/alums – not on first reference; informal usage

Class of 1950, Class of 2016

May Smith '16 (*not* Mary Smith OC '16)

College

Oberlin College, college — if referring to both divisions

- Conservatory of Music (official/formal); Oberlin Conservatory, conservatory
- College of Arts and Sciences (official/formal), arts and sciences
 - *not* College of Arts & Sciences or Arts & Sciences
- Double Degree Program — capitalize title, in headline, on first reference
 - Lowercase on second and subsequent reference in running text: double-degree program, double-degree student

Ethnic and Racial References

If necessary to use a racial distinction, don't hyphenate ethnic groups, even when used as an adjective

- African American, black
- African American businessman
- Japanese American, Asian American

- Latino/Latina, Latin@ but at Oberlin: Latinx, not Hispanic (except for the major/department name)
- American Indian (or name of tribe if known)
- People of color (if referring to underrepresented groups), people of color, POC
- white (if used as a racial designation)
- underrepresented, not minority, if referring to people

Students

first year (not freshman, freshmen), first-year student

second year or sophomore, second-year student

third year or junior, third-year student

fourth year or senior, fourth-year

double-degree student

fifth year, fifth-year student (*although rarely used*)

Avoid gender-based word choices:

Avoid

chairman, chairmen

congressman, congresswoman

policeman

foreman

fireman

coed

stewardess

manmade

manned

manhunt

mankind

freshman

minority

Prefer

chair, chairs

representative, congressperson

officer

supervisor

firefighter

female student

flight attendant

artificial

staffed

search

people

first-year student

underrepresented

Oberlinese (see more in the Oberlin list of acronyms)

Latinx

Obie

Commencement/Reunion Weekend

Convocation, Convocation Series

Office of Winter Term, winter term, winter-term program

First Year Seminar Program, First-Year Seminar, FYSP

Experimental College, ExCo

Oberlin Students Cooperative Association, OSCA, co-op

fall semester

spring semester

Department/Program (style samples)

Department of Africana Studies or Africana studies department

Department of Art, art department

Cinema Studies Program, cinema studies

Creativity & Leadership Project, Creativity & Leadership program

Creative Writing Program, creative writing

Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies Program; gender, sexuality and feminist studies; GSFS

Peace and Conflict Studies Concentration, peace and conflict studies

Jewish Studies Program, Jewish studies

Contemporary Chamber Music

Division of Strings, strings division