

Editorial Quick Style Guide

OUR STYLE

Valparaiso University’s editorial style provides consistent verbiage and usage standards and guidelines for all University communications. This includes, but is not limited to, VALPO Magazine, college newsletters, brochures, web copy, fundraising communication, and enrollment communication. It conforms largely to the Associated Press Stylebook. Any questions regarding Valpo’s style should be directed to Integrated Marketing and Communications at brand.manager@valpo.edu or 219.464.6800.

PHONE/FAX NUMBERS

- Use periods instead of dashes.
- Do not use parentheses around the area code.
- Example: 219.464.6800

STATES

- State names should be spelled out if alone in running text.
 - Example: Valparaiso University is in Indiana.
- Use two-letter Postal Service abbreviations only with complete addresses including ZIP code.
 - Example: Return address on postcard.
- Spell out the names of states in running copy. Use AP Style abbreviations in datelines, lists, etc.
 - Example: Valparaiso, Indiana.
- States without an abbreviation: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah.

State abbreviations:

Alabama, Ala.	Illinois, Ill.	Mississippi, Miss.	North Carolina, N.C.	Virginia, Va.
Arizona, Ariz.	Indiana, Ind.	Missouri, Mo.	North Dakota, N.D.	Washington, Wash.
Arkansas, Ark.	Kansas, Kan.	Montana, Mont.	Oklahoma, Okla.	West Virginia, W. Va.
California, Calif.	Kentucky, Ky.	Nebraska, Neb.	Oregon, Ore.	Wisconsin, Wis.
Colorado, Colo.	Louisiana, La.	Nevada, Nev.	Pennsylvania, Pa.	Wyoming, Wyo.
Connecticut, Conn.	Maryland, Md.	New Hampshire, N.H.	Rhode Island, R.I.	
Delaware, Del.	Massachusetts, Mass.	New Jersey, N.J.	South Carolina, S.C.	
Florida, Fla.	Michigan, Mich.	New Mexico, N.M.	Tennessee, Tenn.	
Georgia, Ga.	Minnesota, Minn.	New York, N.Y.	Vermont, Vt.	

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY

- On first reference, use the full University name.
- On second and further references, Valpo is acceptable.
- Never use VU as an abbreviation, as it can refer to a wide variety of universities.

DATES

- Use the complete, four-digit year.
- Do not use “st”, “nd”, “rd”, “th.”
 - Example: The March 1 event, not March 1st event.
- Spell out the name of the month when used alone or with a year but no day.
 - Example: August 2014
- Use AP Style abbreviations for complete dates.
 - Jan., Feb., March, April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

TIMES

- Use lowercase letters for “a.m.” and “p.m.”
- Use noon and midnight instead of 12 p.m. or a.m.
- If something takes place on the hour, do not include :00 unless it is a formal context such as an invitation.
 - Examples: 2 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

NUMBERS

- Spell out numbers one through nine and first through ninth
- Avoid using numbers at the beginning of a sentence.
- Use numerals for percentages followed by the word percent in text.
 - Example: We have a 96 percent placement rate.
- Do not use an apostrophe in numeric decades
 - Example: 1980s, not 1980’s

ACADEMIC DEGREES

- Use lowercase for bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral, bachelor of science, master of arts, etc.
- The following degree abbreviations should include periods: B.A., B.S., B.M., M.A., M.S., M.Ed., LL.M., J.D., LL.D., Ph.D., M.D.
- The following degree abbreviations should not: BFA, MFA, MHA, MALS, MBA, DNP

EMAILS

- Emails should be listed with all lowercase lettering.
 - Example: first.last@valpo.edu

SERIAL COMMA

- A comma before ‘and’ in a list of text.
 - Example: We went to the grocery store, the park, and the movies.

WEBSITE URLS

- Do not include the www.
 - Example: valpo.edu/brand