

UNLV Style Guide Top Tips

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Oxford comma

Use the Oxford comma, also known as the last comma in a series of three or more things. It helps avoid confusion.

CONFUSING: Her office is decorated with photos of her children, Charlie and Sting.

This begs the question whether her children are named Charlie and Sting. But if we use the Oxford comma — *Her office is decorated with photos of her children, Charlie, and Sting* — we can tell that she is talking about three different “items” and that “Charlie” and “Sting” are not the names of her children.

Times

Use periods: a.m. and p.m. in articles. DO NOT include a :00 when something occurs on the hour. Avoid using 12 a.m. and 12 p.m. Just substitute midnight or noon. It’s surprising how many people don’t know which is which.

Meals will be served at 7 a.m. and 8:30 p.m.

The open house will be held from noon to 1 p.m.

Capitalization: colleges, departments...

We capitalize the names of colleges and schools, but not the names of departments. We capitalize the names of divisions.

*College of Fine Arts
School of Architecture
department of dance
Division of Student Affairs*

Obvious exception: *English department.*

Geographic capitalization

We capitalize the “S” in Southern Nevada and the final “V” in Las Vegas Valley. However, when using the word valley alone in referring to the valley in which most of us reside, it is valley with a lowercase “v.”

Top Tier

When referring to UNLV’s drive to become a Top Tier university, it should always be Top Tier with two uppercase Ts and should never be hyphenated. We view it as a singular entity, which basically means that the two words are treated as one, without punctuation.

President Len Jessup is confident that UNLV will succeed in its efforts to ascend to the Top Tier.

If UNLV is to succeed in its Top Tier aspirations, all faculty and staff members must be part of the effort.

In the latter, Top Tier is an adjective. While this normally would require a hyphen, it does not because we have deemed Top Tier — when it applies to UNLV’s effort — to be a single entity. But...

Her top-tier reputation would seem to assure her inclusion on the list of finalists for the job.

In this case, top tier is an adjective not associated with UNLV’s effort. Therefore, normal punctuation rules apply and the words are hyphenated as a compound adjective.

Titles

Titles of books, journals, magazines, and newspapers are italicized. Titles of chapters and articles are placed in quotation marks.

state of Nevada

When referring to the state of Nevada, the “s” in state is lowercase. Very often the word “state” is unnecessary:

*Nevada attorney general’s office
state attorney general’s office*

NEVER: “state of Nevada attorney general’s office.”

University Libraries

Although the word libraries is plural, University Libraries is treated as a compound singular noun and, therefore, requires a singular verb. (In other words, *University Libraries is* or *has*, not *University Libraries are* or *have*.) And, University Libraries is capitalized. (It is treated like a college.)

Hyperlinks in web copy*

Proper usage is important for search engines and, as a governmental agency, we must comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Link to relevant information. If you mention a specific program, link to its website. If you include an email address, make it an email link. If you name a faculty member, link to his/her bio page.

Make your links contextual so it is apparent what additional information the link will provide. Write it as part of a sentence. **Do not use “Click here.”**

NEVER: For commencement information for graduating students [click here](#).

INSTEAD: [Commencement information for graduating students](#) is now available.

*Because this is a print document, we can’t follow this tip. So, for more information on writing for accessibility, visit: www.unlv.edu/web/accessibility

Confusing Campus Names

Alumni Amphitheater

It is spelled with an “er” at the end.

Judy Bayley Theatre

It’s **Bayley**, not Bailey and Theatre “re” at the end

Beam buildings

Around campus, people often call the one housing the Business School and (for now) Hotel College “Beam Hall.” However, visitors won’t know which Beam we mean so use the full names in external copy:

- **Frank and Estella Beam Hall**
- **Thomas T. Beam Engineering Complex**
- **Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center**
- **Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery**, located within the Alta Ham Fine Arts Building. And note that “Art” in the gallery is singular while the building is plural.

Bigelow buildings

Again, which one?

- **Rod Lee Bigelow Health Sciences Building**, home to the School of Nursing, etc.
- **Robert L. Bigelow Physics Building**, home to the physics department (of course)

Places within buildings

New visitors often look for stand-alone buildings for these places, so help them out by including location details in your copy to external audiences:

- **Black Box Theatre**, located inside the Alta Ham Fine Arts Building
- **Doc Rando Recital Hall**, located inside the Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center

On the other hand, the **Holbert H. Hendrix Education Auditorium** is a freestanding one-story building; visitors sometimes think they have to enter it through its neighbor, the Carlson Education Building.

Flora Dungan Humanities Building

It is **Dungan**, not Duncan. The former NSHE regent and assemblywoman filed more than one lawsuit to get representation for Clark County, so give her her due and get the name right.

Foundations Building

Foundations is plural with an “s” at the end.

Lilly Fong Geoscience Building

Note the unconventional spelling of “**Lilly**.” It’s not like the flower.

Ham buildings

- **Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall** hosts concerts, ballets, Performing Arts Center events, etc.
- **Alta Ham Fine Arts Building**, primarily academic and studio space for the College of Fine Arts. Also includes the Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery and Black Box Theatre

Lied buildings

Pronounced “lead.” (UNLV harbors no lies.)

- **Lied Library**
- **Lied Athletic Complex**

Paradise twice

- **Paradise Elementary School**, part of the Clark County School District but also affiliated with UNLV’s College of Education, is located in the northwest section of campus.
- **Paradise campus** (yes, that’s lowercase) is home to the Division of Educational Outreach and located just south of the main campus across Tropicana Avenue. It is called the Paradise campus because that’s where the elementary school used to be located.

Student Union

Do not use “Moyer” before the name (the name of the old building). The pioneering administrator’s name is now on the **Donald C. Moyer Amphitheater** (“-er”) after the current Student Union was built. Someday it no doubt will carry another name, but for now it’s just the Student Union and, yes, it is capitalized.

Thomas & Mack

Use an ampersand.

- **Thomas & Mack Center**, where the Runnin’ Rebels play (note the lack of a “g” at the end of “Runnin”),
- **Thomas & Mack Warehouse**
- **Thomas & Mack Moot Court Facility**, part of the William S. Boyd School of Law.

University buildings

- **University Hall** is home to the ROTC
- **University Systems Building** is used by the property control folks.

White and Wright

Don’t confuse **John S. Wright Hall** (often called “Wright Hall”) with the **Juanita Greer White Life Science Building** (often called “White Hall” even though Hall is no part of its name)

Need Help? Contact Diane Russell, 895-0894, diane.russell@unlv.edu