



**BRAND,
EDITORIAL,
AND ONLINE
GUIDELINES**

Westfield

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HOW WE COMMUNICATE THE WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY BRAND

The words and images we use can influence how our audiences perceive Westfield State University. Consistency in what we say, how we say it, and how we look defines how our audiences view us, both on campus and in the public.

The purpose of this guide is to provide clarity on how to best represent the Westfield brand through words and images.

Use it to help you write and create materials that inspire confidence in Westfield State University.



THE LOGO

The basis of any successful graphic identity is the logo and the Westfield State University graphic identity is no exception.

The logotype has been specifically designed for Westfield State and no attempts to recreate it should be made. Art files may be obtained from the Marketing Department.

APPROPRIATE USE

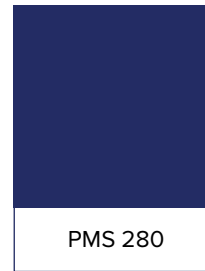
The Westfield State logo may only be used to identify the University's identity, its programs, and its services.

The development and use of any other logo, mark and/or symbol is prohibited. The Westfield State logo may not be combined with any other feature — including, but not limited to other logos, words, graphics or symbols. The shape, proportion or color of the Westfield State logo may not be altered in any way. The logo may not be redrawn or altered.

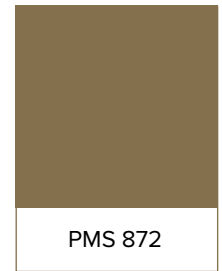
The Westfield State logo should never be printed using any other colors than Pantone 280, Pantone 872, black or white.

SIZE AND PROPORTION

To ensure legibility and consistency, the Westfield State logo should never be reproduced at a width smaller than 1.5 inches. The Westfield State University logo's proportions should never be altered. Do not condense, extend or distort the logo.



PMS 280



PMS 872

C100/M94/Y28/K23

C40/M48/Y77/K17

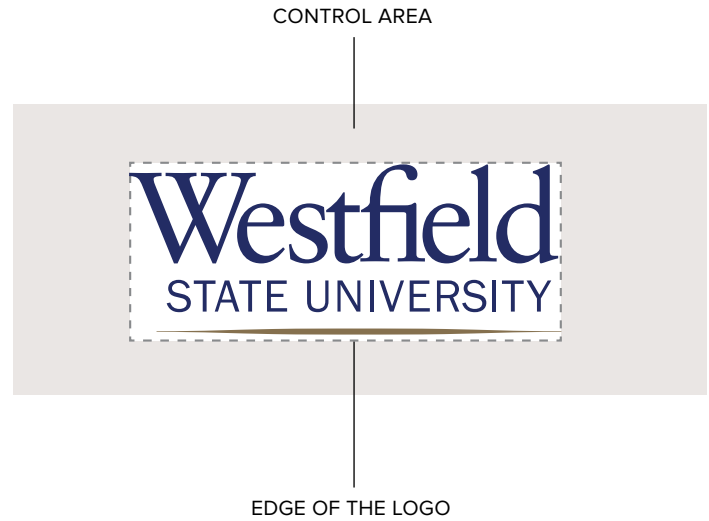


CONTROL AREA

To be visually effective, the Westfield State logo requires an open area around it.

This open area is called “the control area” in this manual. No other visual elements may appear in the control area. The control area is a box of empty space around the logo which is marked by a specific distance (x) from the edges of the logo. This space, (x), is equal to the distance between the baseline of the word “Westfield” and the baseline of the words “State University” and the rule.

Photographs and illustrations can be used behind the logo, though care should be taken to ensure the logo is free from clutter and is easy to read.

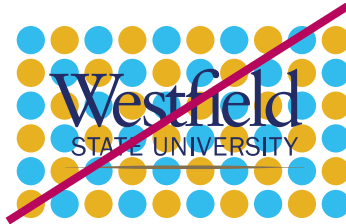


LEGIBILITY

Clarity and readability are important factors to consider when using the Westfield State logo. It is important that the logo be clearly readable to any viewer. Different versions of the logo have been created for the various situations in which the logo may be used.

Do not place the logo on patterned backgrounds that impair the readability of the logo. Colored backgrounds are acceptable, however, it is important to use care in selecting the correct version of the logo to use in these situations.

In situations where the logo is used on a color of similar value to any of the PMS colors, the logo should be reversed (white) from the color or if there is enough contrast, printed in black.



NESTOR

Nestor is the Westfield State University mascot. Westfield’s spirit and athletic marks are symbols of the University, and have their own brand standards and usage guidelines. These are trademarks of the University, and are carefully managed in accordance with NCAA guidelines.

The Westfield State University Owl spirit mark that includes the “W”, and/or the word “Athletics” may only be used by the Athletics Department. Any unauthorized use would be a violation of these trademarks. These marks may not be used without explicit permission.

The Owl spirit mark without the “W” and/or the word “Athletics” can be used by departments, programs, and student groups. It is a symbol of the spirit of the student body and the liveliness of our campus. It should not replace the official Westfield State University logo on publications or electronic media distributed to external audiences.

Please contact Marketing & Communication with any questions about the usage of the athletic and spirit marks.



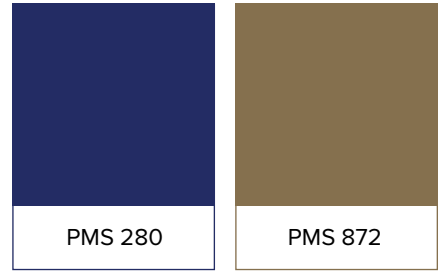
COLOR

Blue is the official Westfield State color. To unify the colors of the school, a dark blue similar to the athletic blue has been selected as the official Westfield blue, PMS* 280.

Gold is the secondary color. Blue should always be dominant over gold. Westfield gold is PMS 872.

A process color equivalent has been assigned for each of the PMS colors for use when printing in CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black, the four colors used in process printing): PMS 280 (CMYK: C100/M94/Y28/K23) and PMS 872 (CMYK: C40/M48/Y77/K17).

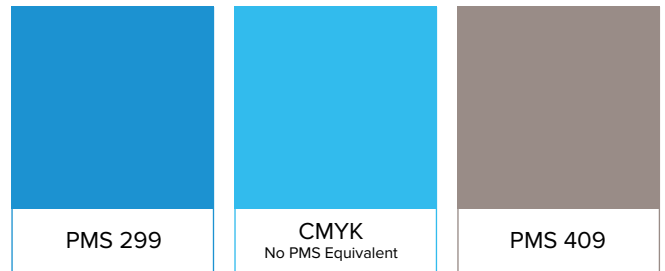
PRIMARY COLORS



C100/M94/Y28/K23
HEX: 022169

C40/M48/Y77/K17
HEX: 022169

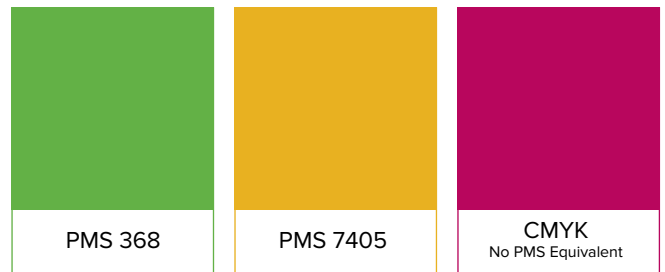
SECONDARY COLORS



C77/M30/Y0/K0
HEX: 1C92D1

C65/M5/Y0/K0
HEX: 33BBED

C41/M41/Y42/K4
HEX: 998C87



C66/M6/Y100/K0
HEX: 63B246

C9/M31/Y100/K0
HEX: E8B121

C7/M100/Y28/K20
HEX: B8065D
USE SPARINGLY

*PMS stands for Pantone Matching System. Pantone Color Standards is the system of ink colors used by printers worldwide to guarantee color consistency.

NOTE: The colors shown on this page and throughout the guidelines are representations of the Pantone Color Standards. Only PMS inks can match the Pantone Color Standards. Pantone® is a registered trademark of Pantone, Inc.

TYPOGRAPHY

A consistent approach to typography reinforces the effectiveness of the Westfield State graphic identity. With consistent use, these typefaces, also known as fonts, will create a strong and recognizable identity for Westfield State University.

Current University branding uses Filosofia and Proxima Nova. You're encouraged to use these typefaces whenever possible. Please contact the Marketing Department to receive these typefaces.

STATIONERY

Stationery includes business cards, envelopes and letterhead. Stationery is one of the most visible representations of an institution. As such, special care must be taken to ensure that all stationery has the same appearance.

The look of the Westfield State stationery is based on a system of color, typefaces, and layout. Contact the Copy Center or the Marketing Department for information about ordering stationery and business cards.

NOTE: No tag lines, slogans, promotional information, or other images or wording not addressed in these standards should be included on any stationery item.

Proxima Nova

Proxima Nova Regular

Proxima Nova Italic

Proxima Nova Semibold

Proxima Nova Semibold Italic

Proxima Nova Bold

Proxima Nova Bold Italic

Proxima Nova Extrabold

Proxima Nova Extrabold Italic

Proxima Nova Black

Proxima Nova Black Italic

Filosofia

Filosofia Regular

Filosofia Italic

Filosofia Bold

MISSION

Westfield State University fosters intellectual curiosity, encourages critical thinking, inspires civic engagement, and promotes a global perspective. A public teaching institution offering quality programs in the liberal arts and sciences with complementing professional studies curricula, we are grounded in our founding principles of academic excellence and educating all in a diverse and welcoming community. Westfield State develops the knowledge, skills, and character essential for students to pursue their potential and become responsible leaders in society. We contribute to the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the region.

VALUES

We commit ourselves to...

- treating all members of our community with dignity and respect.
- building community through inclusivity, supporting the personal development of all community members, and embracing multiple perspectives.
- maintaining excellence and integrity in all that we do.
- Supporting civic engagement in local, regional, and global initiatives.
- making decisions in a transparent and collaborative manner.
- providing affordable public higher education.

VISION

Westfield State University will be recognized for its academic excellence and engaged scholarship. The University will graduate well-rounded and creative leaders able to embrace the challenges and opportunities ahead, contribute to their fields, and improve their communities. Students will gain and create knowledge through multiple forms of learning, including experiential education and faculty-led scholarship. Our globally engaged community will include student, faculty/librarians, and staff international exchanges and active explorations of critical world issues.

The programs and functions of the University will be supported with modern facilities, library and information technology, adequate staffing, and funding to support student and program needs. Westfield State will stand out as an institution operating sustainably, growing responsibly, and maintaining a cohesive, functional, and aesthetically pleasing campus.

Westfield State University will be an inclusive place where decision making reflects the concerns and voices of all parts of the campus community. The University will exemplify how to value diversity and benefit from collaborative decision making. The strong bond among the campus community will make it a place where students, faculty/librarians, and staff want to learn, teach, and work.

WESTFIELD STATE FOUNDATION, INC.

Westfield State Foundation, Inc. is the philanthropic arm of the University, with its own 501 (c) 3 status. It is a separate entity from Westfield State University.

Any reference to the Westfield State Foundation, Inc. should refer to it in full. The “Inc.” should not be omitted.

WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

When using the full name of the University, capitalize the entire name. It is important to use the full name when referring to Westfield State University to distinguish what university is being referred to and also to promote the University.

Ex: She will be attending Westfield State University next semester.

Westfield State

Because there are many schools across the nation with the initials “WSU,” it is important to spell out “Westfield State” or “Westfield State University” in all external documents and publications to ensure recognition in any context.

Capitalize “University” after the first use of Westfield State University.

When using the word “university” in a general sense alone in running text, do not capitalize.

Ex: He will attend a university in the fall.

When using the word “university” to refer to Westfield, capitalize.

PUNCTUATION

Use an apostrophe to show the plural possessive form.

Ex: The Owls’ final victories will lead both teams to the state championships.

WESTFIELD STATE AND OWLS

Fun Facts

- Westfield State’s colors are blue and white with accents of gold. Our mascot is spelled “Nestor.”
- Beginning in the early 1950s, Westfield State has used the nickname “Owls” in reference to the symbol of Athena, the goddess of wisdom.
- Owls are solitary, nocturnal birds of prey.
- A group of owls is called a “parliament.”
- Westfield State was founded in December 1838, by Horace Mann, as the nation’s first coeducational public school for teacher education. The school itself did not open until 1839 as the Barre Normal School for teacher training in Barre, Massachusetts.

The school was renamed in 1932 to the State Teachers College. The school moved to Westfield in 1944, and was renamed the Westfield Normal School. In 1960 it was renamed the State College at Westfield. The name was changed again in 1967 to Westfield State College. In 2010, the college was renamed Westfield State University.

Owls in Athletics

Remember to capitalize “Owls” when referring to Westfield State specifically.

Ex: Thursday night the Owls defeated Worcester State, 7–5.

When referring to female athletic teams, please use the following terms: the Owls, Westfield women or Westfield State.

*Ex: Westfield women defeated Salem State, 9–4.
Westfield State finished third at the swim competition.
The Owls are playing Bridgewater State on Saturday.*

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Academic Degrees

Write out academic degrees in lowercase letters.

Ex: He received a master’s degree in business administration.

When abbreviating—appropriate in a list, citation, or a signature—be sure to use periods.

Ex: Degrees that are offered are: B.A., B.S., M.Ed., M.S., M.P.A., C.A.G.S., and Ph.D.

Acronyms

Always spell out the full name, title or phrase for the first reference immediately followed by the acronym in parentheses.

Ex: The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) recently released its annual Performance Measurement Report.

Company Names

Be sure to write the name exactly as they present it to you.

Use “Co.” or “Cos.” or “Inc.” or “Ltd.” if it appears that way in the formal title. When writing the name without the formal title, use “Company” and not “Co.”.

Spell out “Company” in theatrical organizations. Do not use a comma before “Ltd.” or “Inc.” or with “&” or “and”.

POSTAL ABBREVIATIONS (SEE ADDRESSES)

States

Spell out the name when it stands alone in text, is a title, or is part of a name.

Ex: Westfield State University is located in Massachusetts.

Use “Washington, D.C.” and not just “D.C.” or “DC”.

Abbreviate state names in text using the AP style—not the postal—when citing a city with a state.

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

United States

It is suggested to use “United States” instead of “U.S.,” “USA,” or “America.”

It is acceptable to abbreviate “U.S.” when it is used as an adjective.

Ex: The U.S. government has control over many education grants.

ADDRESSES

Abbreviations in Addresses

Write out and capitalize “street,” “avenue,” “boulevard,” etc. when they are part of a formal street name or address. This applies to addresses within a written text, not for envelopes.

Ex: Westfield State University is located on Western Avenue.

ADDRESSEES (SEE LETTER FORMAT)

Post Office Box

Use “P.O. Box” with periods and no space. Do not use “POB” or “P.O.B.”

Ex: Westfield State University

P.O. Box 1630

Westfield, MA 01086-1630

States

See “Abbreviations” for state abbreviations used in text.

Use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for addresses, but not in text.

Alabama	AL	Montana	MT
Alaska	AK	Nebraska	NE
Arizona	AZ	Nevada	NV
Arkansas	AR	New Hampshire	NH
California	CA	New Jersey	NJ
Colorado	CO	New Mexico	NM
Connecticut	CT	New York	NY
Delaware	DE	North Carolina	NC
Florida	FL	North Dakota	ND
Georgia	GA	Ohio	OH
Hawaii	HI	Oklahoma	OK
Idaho	ID	Oregon	OR
Illinois	IL	Pennsylvania	PA
Indiana	IN	Rhode Island	RI
Iowa	IA	South Carolina	SC
Kansas	KS	South Dakota	SD
Kentucky	KY	Tennessee	TN
Louisiana	LA	Texas	TX
Maine	ME	Utah	UT
Maryland	MD	Vermont	VT
Massachusetts	MA	Virginia	VA
Michigan	MI	Washington	WA
Minnesota	MN	West Virginia	WV
Mississippi	MS	Wisconsin	WI
Missouri	MO	Wyoming	WY

CAPITALIZATION

In General

Always capitalize the first word in a sentence and proper names.

Ex: The guest of honor will be Olivia Moore.

Academic Degrees

Use lowercase for associates, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

Also use lowercase for doctorate and doctoral program.

Ex: I earned my bachelor's degree at Westfield State.

Academic Departments

Capitalize the names of departments, divisions, classes, formal events and offices when the full name of the department is used.

Ex: The English Department will hold its annual Spring Gathering in May.

Use lowercase when the name is used in a general sense.

Ex: Her major is biology.

Academic Majors

Use lowercase with the exception of languages.

*Ex: I majored in Spanish.
She majored in psychology.*

Classes and Courses

Generally use lowercase, unless using a specific and complete title.

*Ex: I took a music course last semester.
I took Basic Music Theory last semester.*

Commencement

Always use lowercase in running text. Capitalize the specific event.

*Ex: It takes many months to plan commencement.
You are invited to speak at the 175th Commencement at Westfield State University.*

Dates

Capitalize days of the week, months of the year, and holidays, but not seasons.

*Ex: This year, Easter will be on Sunday, April 8.
For commuter students, winter can be quite frustrating.*

Geographic Locations

Cities, states, and regions are capitalized.

Ex: Westfield State University is located in the Northeast.

Grades

Capitalize letter grades. For GPAs, use two numerals after the decimal point.

*Ex: He received a B in English class.
His GPA is 3.24.*

Groups

Capitalize groups or organizations that are national, political, racial, social, civic and athletic.

Ex: Westfield State University has many clubs and organizations, including the Republican Club, the Boxing Club, and the Outing Club.

Honors

Use lowercase for cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude.

Ex: He graduated magna cum laude.

Publication and Other Titles

In titles use title caps, in other words, capitalize the first word, the last word, the first word after a colon, and all nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and adjectives.

Ex: In British literature, we will be reading Paradise Lost.

Do not capitalize articles, coordinating conjunctions, or prepositions unless they apply to the previous example.

Ex: In film class, we watched Invasion of the Body Snatchers.

Race

Capitalize names of races, but when referring to race, do not capitalize "black" or "white."

*Ex: The enrollment of African American students has increased recently.
The enrollment of black students has increased since last year.*

Rooms

Capitalize when used with a number. When used with a specific building name, use the number only.

*Ex: The meeting will be held in Room 214.
The committee will meet in Parenzo 136.*

Seasons

Capitalize a season when it is used in a title or as part of a formal name. Use lowercase when the season is used alone.

*Ex: The English Department is still deciding on a date for the Spring Gathering.
The commuter parking lot is crowded during the winter months.*

Semesters

Do not capitalize semesters or terms, unless it begins a sentence.

Ex: Commencement will be held at the end of the spring semester.

Student Classifications

Do not capitalize unless it is used as a designation or a formal title.

Ex: She is a junior majoring in education.

Time Periods and Events

Capitalize time periods and major historical events.

Ex: Westfield State University was founded at the beginning of the Victorian Era.

Titles

A person's title is capitalized only when it precedes his or her name. When a title is placed after a name or is used alone, it is not capitalized.

*Ex: We will be meeting with the President Jane Smith.
I have a meeting with Jane Smith, the president.*

Trademarks

Capitalize anything that is trademarked.

COMMONLY MISTAKEN WORDS AND MISUSED TERMS

adverse/averse

"Adverse" means unfavorable. "Averse" means reluctant.

adviser/advisor

"Advisor" is preferred.

affect/effect

"Affect" and "effect" are both nouns and verbs. Keep in mind that, most often, we use the verb "affect" and the noun "effect."

The verb "affect" means to influence, change or produce an effect; to like to do, wear, or use; or to pretend.

Ex: Typing speed can affect how fast a paper can be produced.

The noun "affect" used most often in a psychology context, is equivalent to situations.

Ex: She had the hesitant, nervous affect of someone unaccustomed to social situations.

The noun "effect" means an impact, and essence, or an influence, operation.

*Ex: Diligent studying has a positive effect on a student's grades.
The policy goes into effect next semester.*

The verb "effect" means to accomplish, to achieve.

Ex: We can effect positive change by working together.

afterward

Not "afterwards"

alma mater/Alma Mater

A school, college or university that one has attended or from which one has graduated. Capitalize when referring to the school's official song.

all right

Not spelled "alright"

allude/refer

To "allude" means to speak without mentioning. To "refer" means to speak of directly.

allusion/illusion

An "allusion" is an indirect reference. An "illusion" is a false impression or image.

alumni/alumnus/alumna/alumnae

"Alumni" are more than one man or a group of men and women. "Alumnus" is one man. An "alumna" is one woman. "Alumnae" are a group of women.

anyway

Not "anyways."

around/about

"Around" should refer to physical proximity. "About" indicates an approximation.

assure/insure/ensure

"Assure" means to give confidence and usually has no object. "Ensure" means to guarantee. "Insure" means to establish a contract for insurance of some type.

beside/besides

Use "beside" to mean at the side of something; to compare with something; or apart from. Use "besides" to mean furthermore; in addition to; or otherwise.

between/among

Use "between" to show a relationship between two objects only or with an objective pronoun (me, her, him). Use "among" when it is more than two.

Ex: Between you and me, I voted for Ralph Nader.

It's hard to choose among the many course offerings available in my major.

biannual/biennial

"Biannual" is twice a year. "Biennial" is once every two years.

bring/take

"Bring" generally indicates something coming toward; "take" indicates something going away or departing from.

capital/capitol

“Capitol” refers to the specific building that is the seat of government for a nation. “Capital” is used on all other occasions for a broad range of meanings.

*Ex: The State of the Union Address will be held in the Capitol building.
The university plans many capital projects, including a new access road.*

complement/compliment

“Complement” is something that supplements. “Compliment” is praise or courtesy.

Ex: Graduating magna cum laude will complement her academic credentials well.

Ex: The student complimented her professor for his presentation on Aristotle.

compose/comprise/constitute

“Compose” is to create or to put together. “Comprise” is to contain, to include, or to embrace. “Constitute” is to make up or to be the elements of.

continual/continuous

“Continual” is a steady repetition. “Continuous” is uninterrupted

council/counsel

A “counsel” gives advice. A “council” is a group of people who usually possess powers with which to govern.

*Ex: The city council works collaboratively with the university.
She sought the counsel of her advisor.*

criteria/criterion

A “criterion” is a quality, a value or a standard of judgment. “Criteria” is the plural.

curricula/curricular/curriculum

“Curriculum” is a program of academic courses or learning activities. “Curricula” are more than one curriculum. “Curricular” is the adjective form.

disinterested/uninterested

“Disinterested” means impartial. “Uninterested” means someone lacks interest.

emeritus/emerita/emeriti

Rather than applying to every retired member of the faculty, this designation is an honor that is officially bestowed by the University, as approved by the Board of Trustees. “Emeritus” refers to a singular person. “Emerita” is one woman, but is rarely used today. “Emeriti” is a group of men and women. References to other retired Westfield State University faculty may be written:

*Ex: Susan Jones, a retired member of the psychology faculty, volunteers as a counselor at the homeless shelter.
Carlos Alfonso, professor of biology (retired), published many articles during his long career.*

farther/further

“Farther” refers to physical distance. “Further” refers to an extension of time.

good/well

“Good” is an adjective meaning something is as it should be or is better than average. When “well” is used as an adjective, it means suitable, proper or healthy. When used as an adverb, “well” means in a satisfactory manner or skillful.

historic/historical

“Historic” means important. “Historical” refers to any event that happened in the past.

in regard to

Not “in regards to.”

irregardless

Incorrect use of “regardless.” Use regardless.

its/it’s

Never use an apostrophe to show possession for “it.” “It’s” is always a contraction for “it is” or “it has.”

*Ex: The style guide’s purpose is to assist people with writing.
It’s not acceptable to misuse words in legal documents.
The bookstore announced its new location.*

lectern/podium

You stand on a podium and behind a lectern.

partially/partly

These two are not interchangeable. “Partially” is used when speaking of a condition or a state. “Partly” implies the idea of a part, as distinct from the whole.

premier/premiere

“Premier” is first in status or in importance. “Premiere” is a first performance.

principal/principle

“Principal” as a noun means a chief person or thing. As an adjective, it means first in importance. “Principle” is a noun meaning a truth, doctrine or law, a rule or code of conduct, and a method of operation.

stationary/stationery

“Stationary” means unchanging or immobile. “Stationery” refers to paper used for written correspondence.

student body

Use “student” or “students” instead.

theater/theatre

The U.S. preference is “theater.” But, there are specific exceptions at Westfield State University, so be sure to double check spellings of specific groups and buildings.

*Ex: Musical Theatre Guild, Student Theater Association,
Ely Studio Theatre*

there/their/they're

There indicates a place - It is the opposite of here.

Ex: "I live here not there."

Their is the possessive of they.

Ex: "They live there but it isn't their house."

They're is a contraction of they are.

Ex: "They're over there in their new house."

toward/towards

“Toward” is correct. “Towards” is less accepted.

who/whom

“Who” substitutes for subjective pronouns (he, she, they). “Whom” is used in the sense of “him,” “her,” or “them” (objective).

*Ex: Who is that professor?
The students, three of whom are English majors, all enjoyed that Spanish course.*

whose/who's

“Whose” is the possessive form of “who.” “Who's” is always a contraction for “who is” or “who has.”

*Ex: Whose textbook is this?
Who's going to present his or her project first?*

your/you're

“Your” is possessive. “You're” is the contraction for “you are.”

*Ex: Your textbook was expensive.
You're going to graduate in May.*

DATES

In General

The United States preference is for styling dates as: month, date, year (without ordinals).

Ex: Oct. 14, 2014

Do not use suffixes with dates.

*Ex: Oct. 14
not Oct. 14th*

In advance publicity of events, include the weekday.

Ex: Commencement will be held Saturday, May 19, 2014.

Decades and Centuries

For decades, use numbers or write them out.

*Ex: the 1920s
the twenties*

Use an “s” without an apostrophe after the year to indicate spans of decades or centuries.

Ex: in the 1960s

An apostrophe after the year is needed for possessives.

Ex: The presidential search was one of 2008's biggest events for Westfield State University.

For centuries, spell out the first nine as words and use numbers for 10 and above.

*Ex: the sixth century
the 19th century*

Graduation/Class Years

In a text use all four digits.

Ex: He is expecting to graduate in 2017.

When you need to abbreviate, use the last two digits preceded by an apostrophe. Make sure to type an apostrophe (') rather than a single quotation mark ('). Only use parentheses if adding the year for a higher degree.

Ex: Jennifer Riley '09 ('11) majored in economics.

Inclusive

Use a hyphen for continuing numbers, but not to replace “to.”

*Ex: The 1999–2000 academic year concluded with fair weather for commencement.
The program ran from 2001 to 2014.*

Use an en-dash (–) to replace “to.”

Months

Months are abbreviated as follows: (note that not all months are abbreviated)

Ex: Jan. Feb. March April May June July Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.

Write the months out if they are used alone or with a year alone.

*Ex: The conference will be held in December.
That course was added to the curriculum in September 2002.*

With Punctuation

No comma is needed between a month and a year, but is required before a year when the month, the date and the year are all used.

Ex: She completed her degree work in May 2002.

*He began the program Jan. 16, 2001 and finished
June 12, 2001.*

When using a month, date, and year, set both the weekday and the year off with commas.

Ex: The conference was held Jan. 13, 2014.

The conference is set for Sunday, Jan. 13, 2014.

INCLUSIVE WRITING (SENSITIVITIES)

In General

Thorough writers try to communicate with their audiences in a manner that doesn't exclude specific individuals or groups. In academia, too, it is often necessary and helpful to write about sensitive issues. It is important to stay current with the ever-changing preferences of our society. Here are some guidelines for appropriate references in those situations.

Only refer to specifics if they are absolutely relevant to what you are writing about.

Keep inclusiveness in mind in references and illustrations. In other words, allude to young and old, men and women, etc.

Ex: The Owls performed well this season, with men's basketball reaching the conference playoffs and the women's swimming team finishing with a 9–1 record.

Draw upon the resources of more than one culture or ethnicity. For instance, quote Gabriel Garcia Marquez in addition to William Shakespeare or Martin Luther King, Jr.

Keep in mind that some populations traditionally referred to as "minorities" in the U.S. are not in the minority in certain regions or internationally. "Under-represented" is a suitable substitute term.

Ex: Westfield State University strives for diversity through recruiting faculty from underrepresented groups.

Age

Point out a person's age only if it is relevant to the subject about which you are writing.

Try to avoid references that may make assumptions about age-related abilities. In particular, always keep in mind that not all university students are between the ages of 18 and 22.

Disability

Use only if it is relevant to what you are writing about.

When writing about individuals with disabilities, use "person first" language.

*Ex: person who uses a wheelchair
blind students – not: the blind*

Do not capitalize "blind," "deaf," or any other terminology for people with disabilities.

Use "disability" and avoid "handicap."

*Ex: disability parking
She has a disability and uses a wheelchair for mobility.*

Race and Ethnicity

Use only when it is relevant to what you are writing about.

When referring to an individual, use the term that he or she prefers.

Here are some generally accepted terms relating to race and ethnicity:

"Person of color" or "people of color" refer to many ethnicities in the United States. It is a preferable substitute for "minorities."

Do not capitalize "black" or "white" when referring to race.

"African American" or "black" are terms acceptable to use to describe black people in the United States.

"American Indian" and "Native American" are usually used based upon preference. When possible, use national affiliation, such as Cherokee or Navajo.

"Asian American" can be used when specifically referring to anyone of Asian descent who is an American citizen. "Asian" is preferred when referring to someone from Asia, including, but not limited to China, Japan, and Korea.

"Hispanic American" can be used for American citizens with ancestors from Spain, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, South and Central America.

"Latino" or "Latina" can be used for someone of Central American descent.

"Caucasian" or "white" are usually interchangeable.

To specify that someone was born in the United States, but is not Native American, use native-born.

Religion

Only use if it is relevant to what you are writing about.

To respect the variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds on campus, use the terms “holiday party” and “winter break” instead of “Christmas party” and “Christmas break.”

Sex and Gender

Use only if it is relevant to what you are writing about.

Try to construct sentences that avoid gender-specific terms. For example, use plural pronouns such as “they” or “their.” This prevents the awkward use of “he/she” or “his/her.”

Ex: To be academically successful, students must do more than attend classes; they must also keep up with the assigned reading, complete their homework and participate.

When writing about or addressing both sexes, be sure to use parallel language.

Ex: Dear Sir or Madam:

Sexual Orientation

The word “gay” is acceptable and preferable for homosexuals, preferably males. It is best to use “gay” as an adjective and not as a noun.

“Lesbian” is preferred for women. When possible, use “gay and lesbian.”

The acronym “LGBTQIA” refers to the community.

Gay, lesbian and bisexual people use multiple terms to describe their commitments. If possible, ask what the individual prefers. Otherwise, “partner” is generally accepted.

NAMES

In General

The words “department,” “division,” “center,” and “program” are capitalized only when they are part of a specific name.

Proper names, titles of programs, and names of universities and departments may be capitalized in the first reference, but may be shortened and lowercased in subsequent references.

Faculty

Use “Dr.” only to refer to a faculty member with a doctoral degree (refer to the Course Catalog).

Use either “Dr.” or “Ph.D.,” but not both, with someone’s name.

Note that news media usually do not use “Dr.” in a title unless it refers to a medical professional.

Formerly, the title “Professor” was reserved for faculty of the rank of associate or full professor only. It is now commonly used for all full-time faculty ranks.

Adjunct faculty may be referred to as “adjunct” or “instructor.”

In the first reference to a faculty member, it is helpful to include all relevant title information.

Ex: Dr. Isabella Rodriguez, assistant professor of history, provided background information.

In subsequent references, depending on context, you may use any of those elements. The important thing is to be consistent within your own document—try to avoid jumping back and forth between “Dr.” and “Professor.”

*Ex: Dr. Isabella Rodriguez, assistant professor of history, provided background information.
Dr. Rodriguez is an expert on the Middle East.
Dr. Isabella Rodriguez, assistant professor of history, provided background information.
Professor Rodriguez received tenure last year.*

With Degrees

Use a comma between a degree and his or her name.

Ex: We will be meeting with John Smith, M.S.W.

With Suffixes

Use a comma before “Jr.,” “Sr.” and I, II, III, etc. There is an exception with newspaper writing, where the comma between the name and “Jr.” is typically eliminated.

Ex: Joseph Jones, Jr. will be attending the conference with us.

NUMBERS

In General

Use words for numbers one through nine, as well as “first” through “ninth.” Write numbers 10 and higher as numerical figures.

Ex: In a class of 21 students, only four received As.

When the digit is four numbers or more, separate with commas, not spaces.

*Ex: 1,200
\$435,000*

For numbers larger than thousands, use words for the placement value only.

Ex: 1.4 million

For plurals, do not use an apostrophe, unless it is in the possessive sense.

Ex: the 1970s

Use numerical figures for percents, page numbers, decimals, credit hours, and GPAs.

*Ex: George's GPA for the fall semester was an impressive 3.94.
For homework, please read pages 17–34.*

Try to avoid starting sentences with numbers, but if impossible, then spell out the number.

Ex: Thirty students registered for this course.

Adjacent Numbers

If there are two numbers in a row in the same sentence, spell out the shorter of the two numbers.

Use numerals in compound adjectives.

*Ex: In the field, there are twelve 3-foot-high posts to mark the exact location of the lines.
He paid for two 3-year subscriptions.*

Age

Always use numerical figures for ages.

Ex: She has a son, 3, and a daughter, 7.

Inclusive

When dealing with ranges of numbers (pages, years) carry over all digits that change and include at least two digits for the second number. Remember to separate the two numbers with an en dash and no spaces.

*Ex: pages 1244–79
1976–84
1998–2003*

In running text, do not substitute the word “to” with a hyphen, unless the numbers are separated by parentheses.

*Ex: He taught English from 1976 to 1998.
He taught English at UCLA (1976–1989) and at Harvard (1989–1998).*

Money

Use the dollar sign (\$) and numerical figures. Remember not to use two zeros after the decimal point, unless you are talking about a range of numbers.

*Ex: \$140
\$140.75
The sweatshirts range in cost from \$22.99 to \$55.*

Insert a comma for numbers in the thousands, unless the number is above the thousands then spell it out.

*Ex: \$2,000
\$2.7 million
1 million*

Ordinal/Cardinal

Spell out ordinal numbers.

Ex: first, second, third, etc.

Cardinal numbers are shown as numerical figures.

Ex: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.

Rooms

Use the building name and the room number only. If the building name is already known, then just say the room and the number.

*Ex: Bates 225
Room 225*

Telephone

If the document is strictly for use on campus, you may omit the area code and first three digits.

Ex: ext. 2356

If the publication is meant for an off-campus audience, include the entire number and the area code, using hyphens and parentheses to separate. When providing more than just a phone number, (a fax number, an e-mail address, etc.) be sure to identify each one.

*Ex: Phone: (413) 572-5763
Fax: (413) 572-5544
E-mail: tgrady@westfield.ma.edu
(ie. Tom Grady: first initial last name@...)*

TIME

Hours are written numerically without zeros.

*Ex: 10 a.m.
1:15 p.m.*

Do not capitalize a.m. or p.m. and be sure to use periods without spaces.

*Ex: 9 a.m.
9:15 a.m.
12:45 p.m.*

A range of times is written using the word “to” in text, but with an en dash in tables.

*Ex: The meeting will be held from 2 to 4 p.m.
Aerobics 9–11 a.m., 6–8 p.m.
Flag Football 10–11 a.m., 5–7 p.m.*

Years (see Dates)

PUNCTUATION

In General

Remember to use only one space, not two, after the end punctuation and before starting a new sentence.

Apostrophes

Use an apostrophe to show an omission of letters.

*Ex: could not = couldn't
they are = they're
are not = aren't
it is = it's*

Use an apostrophe when indicating the possessive for nouns that don't end in "s," using "'s." When the noun ends in "s" add an apostrophe after the "s."

*Ex: We have always supported Westfield State's basketball team.
I really enjoyed learning about Marx's ideas.
Those field houses' roofs need repairs.*

Use an apostrophe to indicate possession for nouns, but not for personal pronouns.

*Ex: This is Tim's exam.
Our tuition is more affordable than theirs.*

Apostrophes are required for "bachelor's degree" and for "master's degree," but not for "associate degree."

Do not use an apostrophe to indicate plurals, including acronyms and abbreviations, unless confusion would result without it.

*Ex: There are five s's in that word.
There were three Ph.D.s in last year's class.
Six NGOs were present.*

Do not use with numbers. (see Dates with Punctuation, Numbers)

Brackets (see parentheses)

Colons

Use after a complete statement to introduce one or more related ideas, such as a series of directions, a list, a quotation or other comment that illustrates or explains the statement.

Ex: Participants in the meeting should bring the following: a pen, a notebook, and a list of interested students.

Do not capitalize the first word after a colon.

Use a colon after an introductory statement.

Ex: The President's message was clear: students cannot be burdened by financial liabilities if they are expected to enjoy a fulfilling educational experience.

Use between the hour and the minute in time notation.

Ex: 5:30

Use a colon in a business letter greeting.

Ex: Dear Robert:

Use a colon to introduce subtitles of a book or other titled items.

Ex: Last semester we read "Gulliver's Travels: Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World".

Comma

Use a comma to signal a pause.

Ex: Whoever it is, is too late.

Use a comma to separate two or more complete sentences.

Ex: Jeff bought all of his textbooks last night, and Jennifer only bought one.

Use a comma before "Jr." or "Sr."

Ex: Professor John Smith, Jr.

Always put commas inside of quotations marks, unless the quote is not a phrase or a clause.

Ex: "In order to pass the quiz," Professor Smith said, "you must be able to define each of the terms from chapter six."

Use a comma after someone's name and before his or her job title or description.

Ex: I want you to meet Jeanne Julian, assistant to the president, communications.

Do not use a comma before someone's name when you state their job title first.

Ex: Assistant to the President Jeanne Julian is late for the meeting.

Use a comma in a series, and before the final "and."

Ex: Please bring to class your textbooks, a notebook, a pen, and a ruler.

Use a comma at the close of any letter.

Ex: Sincerely yours,

Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.

Ex: The professor doesn't feel well. However, the students still want to continue on with class.

Contractions

Use contractions for common phrases, “we don’t” or “there’s” or “it’s.”

Final comma for items in a series

When listing three or more items, Westfield State chooses to use the final (Oxford) comma.

Example: The colors of the flag are red, white, and blue.

Dashes (em dash, en dash and hyphen)

An em (regular) dash is created by using a special keystroke unique to the computer platform you’re using, such as P.C. or Macintosh, without any spaces before, between, or after the dash.

Ex: The athlete had one remarkable strength—great speed.

Use an em dash to denote a sudden break in thought that causes an abrupt change in sentence structure.

Ex: The new library was large enough to accommodate 500 people—a third of the student body.

An em dash can be used instead of a pair of commas or a colon.

Ex: Professor Smith—one of our most enthusiastic instructors—excites his students with a pep talk before each class.

An en dash is created by using a special keystroke unique to the computer platform you’re using, such as P.C. or Macintosh, without any spaces before or after it.

Ex: This College for Kids course is for children ages 8–12.

En dashes are commonly used between inclusive numbers, such as dates and times.

Ex: You can find the examples on pages 117–125.

Use a hyphen to separate compound words that do not begin with an adverb ending in “ly”. According to the Association of Fundraising Professionals there is no hyphen in the word, “fundraiser” if it is used alone. When used to describe, the word is hyphenated.

Ex: We encourage you to participate in on-campus events. We are holding a fundraiser today.

Only use a hyphen with the prefix “re” where it would be confusing.

Ex: We did not have to pay for re-admission to the Woodward Center.

Use a hyphen to join two separate words when they are used as an adjective only.

Ex: He is a co-sponsor alumnus. She is a full-time student.

Ellipses

An ellipsis consists of three periods without spaces.

Use an ellipsis to indicate that material has been omitted from the middle of a quotation.

Ex: “Make everything...simpler.”—Albert Einstein

Do not use an ellipsis at the beginning or at the end of a quote, even if it starts or stops in the middle of the sentence.

Ex: “Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three-fourths theater.”—Gail Godwin

“Good teaching is one-fourth preparation.”—Gail Godwin

According to MLA format, it is necessary to bracket your own ellipses to distinguish them from what may be an ellipsis in the original text.

Ex: DuBois said, “This sense [...] of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt in pity.”

Hyphens (see Dashes)

Parentheses/ Brackets

Brackets are used within a direct quote to indicate words of explanation that are not actually a part of the original quote.

Ex: Professor Wilson said, “If it [the textbook] does not state the answer, then I will tell you.”

Brackets can also be used around ellipses. (see Ellipses)

Parentheses are used to contain optional or additional information in a sentence that could be removed without changing the meaning of the main text.

Ex: The student finally answered (after taking a minute to think) that he did not understand the question.

Parentheses are used to offer an explanation or a definition of a term or an acronym that is to be repeated within the text.

Ex: Westfield State University’s Musical Theatre Guild (MTG) put on a production of Rent last fall.

Periods

Use a period after initials.

Ex: J. D. Smith, Sr.

Use a period after most abbreviations. (see Abbreviations)

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks to indicate the exact words that someone has spoken or published.

Punctuation usually goes inside of the quotation marks. There are a few exceptions including dashes, exclamation points and question marks, which go inside of the quotation marks when they apply to the quote only. When they apply to the whole sentence, they go outside of the quotation marks.

Ex: Janet shouted, "Welcome alumni!"

If it were up to you, would you say, "good day," or "good afternoon"?

Colons and semicolons should be placed outside of the quotation marks—when a quote ends with one of these, it is dropped.

When excluding information within a quote, use ellipses. (see Ellipses)

When including a quote within a quote, use single quotes instead of double quotes.

Ex: "The response to the Owls' victory was a positive one with shouts of 'hurray' and 'good job' all around," the coach replied.

Do not use quotation marks without reason.

Semicolons

Use a semicolon to connect two closely related, complete sentences.

Ex: We have another new coordinator; she is Catherine Parker from UMass Medical.

not: We have another new coordinator; Catherine Parker from UMass Medical.

Use a semicolon between items in a long or complex series or list.

Ex: Officials at the Westfield State University meeting included: Elizabeth Price, president; Robert Marciano, assistant to the president; and Anna Levy, director of marketing.

Use a semicolon to combine sentences with conjuncts.

Ex: Westfield State is a fairly small campus; therefore, most students enjoy the friendly atmosphere.

QUICK REFERENCES

Academia

Alumna: one female graduate

Alumnae: more than one female graduate

Alumnus: one male graduate

Alumni: more than one male graduate or a group of graduates made up of both males and females

Building Names on Campus

The official names of campus buildings and locations are as follows:

Albert and Amelia Ferst Interfaith Center (or Ferst Interfaith Center)
Alumni Field
Apartments: Conlin, Seymour and Welch Halls
Bates Hall
Catherine Dower Center for Performing and Fine Arts
Davis Hall
Dickinson Hall
Dining Commons (referred to internally as the D.C.)
Ely Campus Center and Library (pronounced EE-lee)
Horace Mann Center (333 Western Avenue)
Lammers Hall
Mod Hall
Dr. Nettie M. Stevens Science and Innovation Center
New Hall
Parenzo Hall
Scanlon Hall
Second Congregational Church (lot used for University parking)
University Hall
Wilson Hall
Woodward Center (athletics facility)

Degrees

A.A., A.S. associate degree
B.A. bachelor's degree in arts, Bachelor of Arts degree
B.S. bachelor's degree in science, Bachelor of Science degree
C.A.G.S. Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study
Ed.D. doctorate in education, Doctor of Education degree
M.B.A. master's degree in business administration
M.F.A. master's degree in fine arts, Master of Fine Arts degree
M.P.A. master's degree in public administration
Ph.D. doctorate, doctoral degree, Doctor of Philosophy

Do Not Capitalize

academic degrees in running text

academic departments used generally

"university" in running text when not in reference to Westfield State

seasons: winter, spring, summer, and fall

"spring break"

student classification: sophomore, junior, senior, graduate, etc.

E-mail

Do not capitalize "e-mail" unless the word begins a sentence. Make sure to use a hyphen.

GPA

Do not use spaces or periods.

cum laude 3.30–3.5

magna cum laude 3.60–3.79

summa cum laude 3.80 or higher

Local

The Westfield Athenaeum (local library)

Barre, Massachusetts (town where Westfield State University began) (pronounced BARE-EE)

Bay Path University

Baystate Health

Baystate Medical Center—flagship hospital of Baystate Health

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Westfield

MassMutual Financial Group

Westfield City Council

Westfield Courthouse

Westfield Headstart Program

Mascot

Nestor the Owl (see Owls and Westfield State University)

TITLES

In General

Use quotation marks around song titles, short poems, essays, periodical articles, short stories, episodes of television shows, and radio programs.

Italicize titles of books, long poems, plays, periodicals, pamphlets, published speeches, long musical works, television and radio programs, movies, and works of visual art.

Academic Papers

Titles of academic papers, essays and journal articles go inside of quotation marks.

Ex: The essay was titled "Politics and the English Language."

Books

Use italics for books and textbooks unless they are reference books, such as dictionaries or almanacs.

Ex: An excellent source for any writer is The Elements of Style by Strunk and White.

Use quotation marks for book chapters or individual selections.

Ex: The second chapter, "How to Form a Thesis," lists what questions to ask yourself about your paper's goal.

Conferences

Capitalize the main, important words only and do not enclose in quotation marks or italicize.

Courses

Capitalize the main words in the title of a course. Quotation marks or italics are not necessary.

Ex: I will be taking American Economics with Professor Jones next semester.

Magazines and Newspapers

Capitalize and italicize the title without using quotation marks. Don't capitalize the word 'magazine' unless it is part of the publication's title.

Ex: I receive Teaching Across America magazine once every two months.

Only capitalize "the" if it is part of the title.

*Ex: I subscribe to The Wall Street Journal.
I also like to read the Daily Hampshire Gazette.*

When listing multiple publications or periodicals, use lowercase "the" or eliminate it completely.

Ex: We read the New York Times, the Daily Hampshire Gazette and the Springfield Republican every morning.

Movies/Theater/Television

Italicize and capitalize titles of movies, plays, and television shows.

Ex: The Musical Theatre Guild recently performed a production of Grease.

Music

Use quotation marks and capitalize song titles.

Ex: We listened to "Jingle Bells" over and over again.

For long musical works, italicize and capitalize.

Ex: In class today, we will listen to Mozart's The Magic Flute.

Poetry

Use quotation marks for short poems.

Ex: My favorite Robert Frost poem is "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

Italicize titles of long poems.

Ex: In British Literature, it is essential to read Beowulf.

WEB AND E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Your e-mail represents Westfield State University as much as any other official written document does.

Remember to assess your audience. Realize whom you are addressing. People who do not know you personally will form an impression of you by reading your message. Think about exactly what it is you need to say, phrase it correctly, and use correct grammar.

Keep in mind that e-mails are not private property. Every Westfield State University e-mail account belongs to the University. Anything that is included in your Westfield State University account is considered an official University document.

Because messages can easily—or mistakenly—be saved and forwarded, assume that any message you send is a permanent record. You depend on the recipient for confidentiality.

Do not capitalize “e-mail” unless the word begins a sentence.

Here are some best practices:

When sending an e-mail, be aware of the specific address lines.

Ex: To: this line is for the address of the recipient

CC: short for “carbon copy”; this gives a copy of your message to people you do not intend to receive a response from; this indicates an “FYI.”

BCC: short for “blind carbon copy”; the people addressed in the To: and the CC: lines will not be able to see that you shared the message with anyone addressed in this line.

The subject line should not be left blank. The subject should be brief and provide an indication of the contents of the message.

Messages should be concise and to the point.

If including a salutation, use one that you would normally use in traditional written correspondence.

ALWAYS reread your message before you send it.

Avoid using fancy fonts, special characters, and colors because they are not read the same by all machines.

Be sure to include your name, title and contact information at the end of each e-mail (often referred to as a signature).

When forwarding a message, remember that it is acceptable and sometimes preferable to delete any information that is irrelevant to the message that you want to send or to cut and paste the pertinent material into a new e-mail. Avoid forwarding the entire message, excess material, or material that might reflect poorly on the original sender.

Avoid using informal language in e-mail correspondence.

Clearly separate opinion from non-opinion.

Identify yourself and your affiliations clearly.

Putting On Our Best Face

The Westfield State University website is often the first impression prospective students, community members, donors, and others will have when they interact with the University. It is important that the pages—and content within—look and sound like Westfield State University. Just as it is important to maintain consistency in our printed materials, it is important that our website reflect our brand values.

Visual Styles

The University website is built in a content management system (often referred to as a CMS), allowing users to maintain their content easily within templates that maintain the design reflecting the Westfield State brand.

Information about the design of the website can be found in the Web Style Guide, available on the Marketing & Communication website. Because the templates are already loaded with the proper fonts, color palette, grid system, etc., the main branding responsibility for the content managers is through the editorial style of the content. This section gives guidelines and information on writing for our website.

WRITING FOR THE WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

User-Centered Content

Website users (including prospective students and their parents, current students, faculty and staff, and others) are looking for content that:

- Is relevant to their immediate questions and tasks
- Can be found in the places they’re looking
- Explains how it benefits them
- Is accurate and up-to-date
- Tells a story with specific examples, details, and quantifiable data
- Provides enough information to accomplish their goals, but not so much that the site becomes unwieldy and difficult to navigate

Message Architecture

When ordering content on a page, keep these structural rules of thumb in mind:

Primary Message

In a user’s first 10 seconds, each page should communicate its key idea.

Secondary Messages

In two minutes, a page (or section) should address 3–5 more ideas that answer questions like:

How is (fill in the blank) better at Westfield State?

How does (fill in the blank) help students?

What is the personality/culture of (fill in the blank)?

Messaging Guidelines

1. Develop a student perspective

Prioritize your students—prospective or current—because they're the ones who use your site more than anyone else. Highlight the University's programs and emphasize the things that bring students to Westfield State (affordability, location, class size, etc.)

2. Break it down or cut it out

Consider your text another way for users to navigate your site without the clutter. Blocks on blocks of text can be confusing and frustrating for your site users.

Narrowing down a message to its purest form is essential for modern website reading.

Topics should be identified at the point of discussion in the site, and answered concisely.

3. Give context, localize

Define yourself at every turn: For pages that target external users, assume your audience has no idea who you are. Remind your audience what makes you a great public university, instead of trying to compete with private institutions' messaging. Think about your place in the academic community and in the neighborhood, and who you want to be.

4. Friendly, accessible content in plain English

Internal terms, unfamiliar acronyms, and technical language can alienate readers. It should be easy to understand, but not patronizing. Show them respect with clear, concise and appropriately casual language—just like if you were having a conversation.

Language

Good web content communicates in a consistent tone and style.

Tone

Your tone and voice are what distinguish you from other organizations. The tone of your web content should be informative, open, and approachable. Users come to our site with specific tasks in mind, and content buried in difficult, formal passages will only slow them down.

Tone will need to vary depending on what you are communicating and to whom. Content about why a prospective undergraduate should apply shouldn't be as formal and direct as content explaining how to fill out a FAFSA request (but that shouldn't be written in legalese, either). Think about your user's context and why people would be reading this page, and go from there.

Style

Person

Use first-person plural ("we") and speak directly to users ("you") so your content will sound approachable instead of detached or impersonal.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is distinct from other forms of media in that it allows for back-and-forth communication in real-time. Many departments, offices, groups and organizations at Westfield State maintain their own social media accounts, and the University Marketing Department manages the school's main accounts on most major social media platforms. **Please keep in mind that your presence on social media platforms is as much of a representation of the University as our printed publications and website. What you say in posts and share through photos should reflect the Westfield State University brand in a positive light.**

All campus groups can use the University's main social media channels to promote a program or event. In the days or weeks before the event, please file a Work Request Form with the Marketing Department with all the relevant information.

Starting A Social Media Account

All social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) have strengths and weaknesses. In most cases, it's not advisable to try to maintain a presence on every platform. A better approach is to start on one platform, focusing on posting consistent updates that add value to the people following the account. Consider what type of content will be generated (text? photos? video?) as a basis for choosing which platform is the best fit.

Before launching a new social media account, please file a Work Request Form with the Marketing Department, who can offer advice and content suggestions.

Maintaining A Social Media Account

A social media account needs to be active in order to attract new followers. An account should have new content posted on at least a weekly basis. Posting on a daily basis is ideal. Somewhere in between is often the happy medium. It's easy to underestimate how much content it takes to maintain a consistent social media presence. Not every group or organization will generate enough content to sustain a page—in those cases, using the main University channels to promote your programs may be the best approach.

It is also important to use social media to engage with people. Being active on social media means more than sending posts into the ether. Reply to questions and comments. Use functions such as "Likes," Favorites" and "Retweets" to build community.



If you have any questions regarding the Westfield State University graphic identity or need to obtain logo art, typefaces or print templates, please contact the Marketing Department.

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