

New Mexico State University ARP Editorial Style Guide

Formatting: Follow NMSU brand standards regarding fonts, colors and visual identity guidelines, which can be found at brand.nmsu.edu.

Acronyms: Avoid acronyms unless they are listed in a policy's "Definitions" section or the ARP Glossary. Always capitalize acronyms.

Shall: Do not use "shall" – instead, use present tense to describe the action being taken or, if imperative, use "must" or "will."

Cross-referencing: Citations using a hyperlink to direct the reader to a rule, policy or other authority should be included in parentheses at the end of the sentence for which the cross-reference or citation is given. EXAMPLE: NMSU operational policy requires employees to use their official NMSU email account. ([ARP 15.15](#)). If referenced and linked within the text, then do not also list under "Related Cross References."

Capitalization

Academic Degrees: Capitalize only when is part of the official degree title. *He earned a Master of Science in Chemistry. She earned a master's degree in chemistry.*

Academic Subjects: Capitalize only when it is the name of a language, part of a unit name, or a specific course title.

Academic Titles

Capitalize official titles preceding names *Chancellor Dan Arvizu*.

Lowercase those that follow names: *Dan Arvizu, chancellor of NMSU*.

* The exception to this would be when the title is an endowed chair and appears after the name: *Enrico Pontelli, Regents Professor and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences*.

Modifiers accompanying titles such as professor, dean and chairman are *not* capitalized, even when the title precedes the name: *art Professor Julia Barello*.

In most cases, it will be better to place the title after the name, because academic titles tend to be long or to require modifiers: *Joe Lakey, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences*, reads better than *Arts and Sciences Associate Dean Joe Lakey*.

Use professor only for full professors, not as a generic term for faculty members. To avoid awkward constructions such as *economics Associate Professor Larry Blank*, use *Larry Blank, an assistant professor of economics*.

Do not capitalize descriptive terms that precede names: *astronomer Nancy Chanover*.

For department chairs, the correct reference is academic department head for (department name): *"Today we have three times the research funding we had 10 years ago," says Brad Shuster, academic department head for biology.*

Black: Use the capitalized term as an adjective in a racial, ethnic or cultural sense: *Black people, Black culture, Black literature, Black studies, Black colleges*. *African American* is also acceptable for those in the U.S. The terms

are not necessarily interchangeable. Other commonly used terms include Hispanic or Mexican American, Latin American, Native American, and Asian or Asian American.

Board of Regents: Capitalize when referring to the formal body, whether preceded by NMSU or not. Do not capitalize “the regents” or “regents.”

College Names: Capitalize the full names of each college on first reference but use lower case *college* or *colleges* on subsequent references. Here are the proper names of the colleges at New Mexico State:

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences

College of Business

College of Engineering

College of Health, Education and Social Transformation

Honors College

NMSU Online

Composition Titles: For our own publications, the rule of thumb is to italicize the titles of major works and use quotation marks for titles of shorter ones.

Specifically – italicize the titles of books, magazines, newspapers, academic journals, plays, motion pictures, operas and other long musical compositions, collections of poetry and long poems, paintings and statues. Put quotation marks around the titles of magazine articles, short stories, songs, speeches, radio and television programs, short poems and unpublished works.

Directions and Regions: In general, lowercase *north, south, east, west, northeast, northern*, etc., when they indicate compass direction. However, capitalize when they designate regions: *West Texas, Northern and Southern California, South Florida, the South Side of Chicago, the Lower East Side of New York, North Dallas, Northern New Mexico*.

With names of nations, lowercase unless they are part of a proper name or are used to designate a politically divided nation: *northern France, eastern Canada, the western United States*, but *Northern Ireland, South Korea, South Africa. Southwestern America offers a splendid laboratory for Interdisciplinary Studies*.

Legislature: Capitalize: *the state Legislature*.

NMSU Defined Terms: When a term is given a specific definition for purposes of an operational policy, that term should be capitalized to alert the reader to look for the definition. Examples include: NMSU Community (a commonly used term that is defined in some ARPs), NMSU Premises (a commonly used term that is defined in some ARPs).

Seasons: Lowercase all seasons and seasonal terms such as *fall, spring, winter, wintertime*, etc., unless they are part of a formal title: *Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics*, etc. (what about fall semester, spring 2004 semester?)

Southwest: Lowercase when referring to direction but capitalize when referring to the region. *He is producing a comic book series set in the Southwest*. Same applies to other regions – Northeast, Midwest, Northwest, etc.

Spring break: No need to capitalize. *It was a week before the beginning of spring break*.

Unit Names: Capitalize following a title only if the reference is, in fact, the formal name of a unit. *Bob Smith, senior director of strategy, is expected to speak. Bob Smith, vice president of Auxiliary Services, is expected to speak.*

University: Do not capitalize this other than when it is the first word in a sentence. *People who made planned gifts to the university were honored as members of the 1888 Society* not *People who made planned gifts to the University were honored as members of the 1888 Society*. Within ARP, in almost all cases, context will clearly indicate that “university” refers to New Mexico State University. When it is not clear, drafters should use the official name.

Academic Degrees

Several variations are acceptable, but we should lean toward the simplest in most cases: *bachelor’s degree, master’s degree* and *doctorate*. The apostrophe goes in the same place for the plural: *master’s degrees*, not *masters’ degrees*. *Associate degree* is not possessive. In some instances it might be pertinent to specify *bachelor of science degree in biology* or *master of fine arts* or some such, but use the lowercase style for those also.

Avoid using *baccalaureate* as a substitute for *bachelor’s degree*, but if you must, do not couple it with the word *degree*. *Baccalaureate means bachelor’s degree*. Similarly, it’s *doctorate* or *doctoral degree*, but never *doctorate degree*.

Avoid abbreviations of degrees; there are too many of them and most non-academic people don’t know what they mean. But if you have reason to use abbreviations, make sure you use the right ones. All Ph.D.s are doctorates, but not all doctorates are Ph.D.s. *Charley Johnson, who is one of only a handful of NFL players ever to earn a doctorate, served as head of the Chemical Engineering Department at NMSU.*

NMSU and Regional Terms

“A” Mountain

Alumni: This Latin word has separate forms and plurals for male and female graduates. One male graduate is an *alumnus*; one female graduate is an *alumna*. *Alumni* (not *alums*) correctly refers to a group of male graduates or a group of both males and females, and *alumnae* is used for plural female graduates. All alumni referenced in NMSU alumni publications (i.e. *Panorama*) should have their alumni year listed after their last name: *Joe Smith ’58*.

Arrowhead Center: Arrowhead Center, New Mexico State University’s hub for technology commercialization and business assistance, was formed in 2004 to help prospective entrepreneurs identify markets, verify new technologies, write business plans and find financing. Through the center, companies have access to 150 business advisers, including university students, faculty members and retired business people. In exchange, the center receives a fee or equity share in the new companies.

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Community Colleges:

Doña Ana Community College

New Mexico State University-Alamogordo

New Mexico State University-Grants

New Mexico State University-Las Cruces (or NMSU main campus)

Degree Programs: NMSU’s main campus offers traditional face-to-face degree programs, including 88 bachelor’s degree programs, 59 master’s programs, 13 graduate certificate programs, 30 doctoral programs and one specialist in education program. Associate degree programs are administered by the community colleges.

Doña Ana County: Needs an ~ over the “n” in Dona. To insert this symbol, go to insert/symbols and select the “Latin-1” subset. Select the ñ character and click “insert.”

Honors College: New Mexico State University established the state’s first Honors College in 2003. The Honors College supplements the degrees offered by the university’s six colleges with a core curriculum leading to honors distinctions. Honors courses are taught in seminar formats by the university’s top faculty. Other components of the Honors College are the Crimson and Centennial Scholars programs and the Office of National Scholarships and International Education, formerly the Fellowships Office.

Land-grant: NMSU is a land-grant university, a Hispanic-serving university and a NASA Space Grant institution.

Los Alamos National Laboratory

New Mexico Department of Agriculture: The New Mexico Department of Agriculture is the only state cabinet agency headquartered outside Santa Fe. It is located on campus and reports to the governor and NMSU Board of Regents. This agency is sometimes confused with the College of Agriculture and Home Economics, one of six colleges at the university. NMDA is a regulatory agency responsible for stopping the spread of animal and plant diseases, as well as regulating gas pumps statewide.

New Mexico State University: In external news and publications, always spell out *New Mexico State University* on first reference. Thereafter, use New Mexico State or NMSU when space is a factor, as in headlines or listings with multiple agencies: *NMSU’s Physical Science Laboratory*.

If the use of “State” could result in confusion with a state government agency, use an alternate format: *university or campus police* to distinguish from the New Mexico State Police.

Do not capitalize “system” when referring to the NMSU system.

Physical Science Laboratory: Not Physical Sciences Laboratory.

President’s Associates: Not Presidents’ Associates when referring to this organization that supports scholarships for NMSU students.

Rio Grande: Since *Rio* means “river” in Spanish, *Rio Grande* stands alone. Don’t use *Rio Grande River*.

Sam Steel: Sam Steel was shot in 1893, weeks before he was to become the first university graduate and the first college graduate in New Mexico Territory. His family members later attended and graduated from the university. The correct spelling of the name is *Steel* (no final “e”). (The campus street sign for Sam Steel Way on the west end of campus has an incorrect spelling.)

Sandia National Laboratories

Schools: New Mexico State University has five schools:

Klipsch School of Electrical Engineering, College of Engineering

School of Nursing, College of Health, Education and Social Transformation

School of Social Work, College of Health, Education and Social Transformation

School of Teacher Preparation, Administration and Leadership, College of Health, Education and Social Transformation

School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences