

Randolph College  
Editorial Style Guide  
Revised 2016

## Introduction

The Randolph College Editorial Style Guide was developed by the Office of College Relations to standardize the College's print and online publications and to simplify decision making when writing on behalf of the College. A style guide is a set of standards to be applied when writing and designing documents. Many organizations develop their own style guides to reflect their specific preferences and practices and to ensure that publications remain stylistically consistent. Not only will these guidelines perpetuate a consistent and positive College identity, but they will also help ensure that your readers comprehend the message you are trying to convey.

Randolph's Editorial Style Guide is based on *The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)* 15th Edition (The University of Chicago Press), *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* 11th Edition (G. & C. Merriam Company), and the *Associated Press Style Guide*. Some conventions, however, are specific to Randolph College and may vary from other recommended writing styles. Moreover, these guidelines are intended for use with marketing, news, and promotional materials only; they should not be referred to when writing academic or scholarly essays. Other more formal communications, such as invitations, notes, and letters may also follow different style guidelines. We suggest you refer to these resources for further guidance on more specific issues.

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## A / AN

Remember that the rules for using "a" or "an" are determined by pronunciation—use "a" before consonant sounds and "an" before vowel sounds.

She is a Randolph College student.

He received an M.A. from Yale University.

It takes more than an hour to copy an historic document.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

### COURTESY TITLES

Do not use courtesy titles in Randolph publications except for those used for formal events, such as an event program or invitation. When using courtesy titles, abbreviate *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, and the

formal title *Dr.* when used with a person's full proper name. Do not use *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, and *Dr.* in combination with any other title or with abbreviations of academic degrees.

Use the title *Dr.* when referring to a doctor of medicine, veterinary medicine, or dentistry. Do not use it to designate a doctor of philosophy—the holder of a Ph.D.—or the holder of a juris doctorate (JD).

Dr. John Hamilton, Mr. Mark Smith, Jr.

## EMERITUS

Emeritus/Emerita are part of the person's title and should be capitalized or not capitalized along with the rest of the title. Emeritae refers to a group of multiple women, and emeriti refers to a group of multiple men or men and women. Though these are considered foreign words, they should not be italicized since they are commonly known. It is acceptable to italicize the words if they are in a formal program, invitation, etc.

Librarian Emerita Martha Simonton Bell conducted the workshop.

Fred Rowe, professor of psychology emeritus, recently published a paper on his continuing research.

Titles used with a surname only are spelled out, and titles with a full name are abbreviated:

General Anderson

Professor Smith

Senator Robb, but Sen. Edward Kennedy

Hon. Frank M. Hull

**Exception:** When “the” is used with the title, then it is spelled out:

The Honorable Susan Webber Wright

**Use only one title with a name:**

John W. Smith, Esq., not Mr. John W. Smith, Esq.

Judge Susan Webber Wright, not the Honorable Judge Susan Webber Wright

Marcus Welby, M.D., not Dr. Marcus Welby, M.D.

## PERIODS

Most acronyms do not have periods; initials do. No spaces should be placed between letters. This includes abbreviations of the college degrees B.F.A, M.A.T., and MEd. (See “Academic Degrees and Honors.”)

ASAP

NAACP

E.F. Hutton

## **FIRST REFERENCE / SECOND REFERENCE**

If a phrase is used repeatedly in text, using an acronym may speed the reader along. To avoid confusion, most words should be abbreviated only after they have been spelled out and the abbreviation indicated in parentheses. Words do not have to be capitalized in order to be abbreviated.

Jane Smith is a resident director (RD) in Bell Hall. As an RD, her job is to help first-years become part of the campus community.

She has found many of her job leads through the Career Development Center (CDC). The CDC staff is known for its professional approach to problem solving.

### **Exceptions:**

Randolph College should always be used on first reference. Randolph or the College (note the capital C) is allowed on second references.

RC should NEVER be used in official publications. It is only appropriate in more casual writing, such as internal communications.

When referring to Randolph-Macon Woman's College, use the full name on first reference and R-MWC on second reference. There is no need to indicate this acronym in parentheses after the full name of the College.

Correct:

Students at Randolph College balance learning with fun. They enjoy their time at Randolph, as do many college students. They have fond memories of the College.

Incorrect:

A brick wall surrounds Randolph College (RC).

Randolph-Macon is the name of a college in Ashland, Virginia. It should never be used as a nickname for Randolph or R-MWC in official College publications.

R(MW)C is not an official acronym for the College and should never be used in College publications or writings.

Some words are abbreviated so often that they no longer need to be spelled out on the first reference. Many of these acronyms are pronounced as words. Some of these words, because of convention, also use periods. If in doubt, check the dictionary.

ACT (American College Test)

A.D., B.C. (small caps—see Appendix A)

A.M., P.M. (small caps—see Appendix A)

NAACP

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)

U.S. is often abbreviated when used as an adjective. (See also U.S.)

U.S. court system

I live in the United States.

## PLURAL AND POSSESSIVE ACRONYMS

If a noun is expressed as an acronym and can be made plural, it can be pluralized with a lowercase s. If it is possessive, use an apostrophe s.

Example:

The RDs held a meeting for all residential life staff. The new RA's tardiness was duly noted.

## ACADEMIC DEGREES AND HONORS

Randolph College confers three undergraduate degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Fine Arts. Randolph abbreviates these degrees as B.A., B.S., and B.F.A. All degree abbreviations should use periods after each letter. In the past, the Bachelor of Arts degree was sometimes abbreviated as A.B. from the Latin *artium baccalaureus*. However, since the Randolph diploma is written in English, alumnae and alumni should abbreviate their degrees as B.A.

Randolph College also awards two graduate degrees in education: the Master of Arts in Teaching or the Master of Education. These degrees are abbreviated as M.A.T. and M.Ed.

Degrees can be expressed in many ways. Be careful of possessives:

She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Randolph College. (formal)

She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree. (uppercase, no apostrophe)

He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. (informal, not specific, lowercase)

She has a B.S. in chemistry from Randolph College and an M.S. from Virginia Tech.

## DR. OR PH.D.

Use *Ph.D.* after a name to indicate the academic degree. Reserve the pre-name designation of Dr. for medical doctors. We prefer the use of professor as a title rather than Dr. before a name because it avoids confusion concerning professors who have attained the highest degrees in their field but do not hold Ph.D.'s. (Some professors hold an M.F.A., for example.) If writing for a College publication, it is preferable to put a professor's title after his or her name instead of before. If the title is placed before the faculty member's name, capitalize Professor only if it is standing in place of the professor's first name, or if the entire title (i.e. Associate Professor of Biology) is used.

Correct:

The project involved physics professor Ann Smith.

Assistant Professor of Physics Ann Smith led the project.

The correct style for a plural of Ph.D. is Ph.D.'s. (See also Courtesy Titles)

Correct:

She went to Dr. Robert Smith for a physical.

His advisor is Anne Robinson, Ph.D., a history professor.

This year's award goes to Randolph College Professor of Chemistry Luz Calle.

Professor Jones has two Ph.D.'s.

Preferred:

He had a meeting with Professor Smith yesterday.

In a College publication:

He had a meeting with John Smith, a history professor, yesterday.

## ACADEMIC YEARS

The preferred style for classes is first-year (preferred over freshman), sophomore, junior, and senior. Academic years, such as junior and senior, are lowercased, but groupings that act as proper names, such as the Class of 1999, should be capitalized.

Examples:

He is a senior.

She is a member of the Class of 2010.

The Sophomore Class is conducting a survey of 100 juniors.

When identifying individual students or alumnae and alumni, the class year should be included behind the name using a reverse apostrophe. (Make sure the apostrophe points to what is missing.)

Sue Smith '15 was elected to Student Government.

Exception: In a few cases, the last two digits of the class years of alumnae may be identical to that of current students or more recent alumni and cause confusion. In this case, only use the abbreviated class year for the most current student or alumnae or alumni. Put (Class of XXXX) for the older class year.

Example: Sue Barry (Class of 1917) created an endowed scholarship that is now helping students like Mark Toms '17.

## CLASS YEARS FOR THOSE WITH MULTIPLE DEGREES FROM THE COLLEGE

If an alumnus has a master's degree as well as a bachelor's degree from the College, add the class year and additional degree in this style:

Susan Jones '12, '13 M.A.T.

Walt Mason '11, '14 M.Ed.

## Accent Marks

In some instances, accent marks help define a word. For instance, "résumé" has an entirely different definition than "resume." Follow the recommendation given in the latest edition of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

## ADDRESSES AND LETTERS

### ADDRESSES

In running text, all elements of an address, except numbers 10 and over, should be spelled out. Commas should follow addresses, cities, and states, Use the nine-digit ZIP code whenever possible. Do not use two-letter abbreviations for state names in running text.

The College is located at 2500 Rivermont Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia, 24503-1526.

Bill Brenning visited Charleston, South Carolina, as part of the American Culture Program and stayed at 12 North Elm Street.

### IN LETTER HEADINGS

On envelopes, in tables, and in uses where address elements are repeated, abbreviate elements of the street address and use postal code abbreviations for the state. The U.S. Postal Service prefers minimal punctuation.

Envelope:

Mr. John Adams  
2002 Constitution Ave. SW  
Washington DC 20004-1059

Print e-mail addresses as all lowercase: [wwildcat@randolphcollege.edu](mailto:wwildcat@randolphcollege.edu)

Web addresses:

Do not alter uppercase and lowercase; Aside from the domain name (such as [randolphcollege.edu](http://randolphcollege.edu)), most parts of web addresses are case sensitive. In formal writing, the website address should be followed by a period if it is at the end of a sentence.

The College's website address should always appear entirely in lowercase:  
[www.randolphcollege.edu](http://www.randolphcollege.edu)

Advisor

Use advisor (not adviser) for Randolph College faculty and staff who work with students.

Susan met with her advisor, Professor Irwin.

The new faculty member is the advisor for the *Sundial*.

African-American

Hyphenate. The term is acceptable for an American black person of African descent, but is not an acceptable generic term. For instance, Caribbean descendants generally refer to themselves as Caribbean-Americans. The term black is also acceptable. (See also, black)

Ages

Use numerals (only whole numbers—no fractions or decimals): His daughter is 3 years old. When following a name, separate by a comma, e.g. John's children Ben, 3, Phil, 5, and Betsy, 8. Ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for nouns use hyphens, e.g. John's oldest child is an 8-year-old (noun). He also has a 3-year-old son (adjective).

Alumnae/alumni

Use alumna and alumnae to reference graduates of R-MWC. For graduates of Randolph College (Class of 2011 and beyond) use alumna or alumnus and alumni.

It is preferable in College publications to use “and” when referring to alumnae and alumni rather than using a hyphen or other symbols to separate the words.

Correct: The alumnae and alumni who attended the open classes at Reunion provided positive feedback.

Incorrect: The alumnae/alumni who attended the open classes at Reunion provided positive feedback.

The use of “alum” is only acceptable in casual writing and not in formal publications, except in special circumstances.

The official name of the alumni association is the Randolph-Macon Woman’s College Alumnae and Randolph College Alumni Association.

Ampersand (&)

Use ampersand only when it is part of a proper name, not in formal writing. (Some promotional copy uses & when space is limited and the writing style is casual)

Procter & Gamble

The Center for Financial Planning and Assistance

## APOSTROPHES AND QUOTES

### CLASS YEARS

When identifying individual students or alumnae and alumni, the class year should be included behind the name using a reverse apostrophe. (Make sure the apostrophe points to what is missing.)

Sue Smith ’15 was elected to Student Government.

Exception: In a few cases, the class years of alumnae may overlap that of current students or alumni and cause confusion. In this case, only use the abbreviated class year for the most current student or alumnae or alumni.

Example: Sue Barry (Class of 1916) created an endowed scholarship that is now helping students like Mark Toms ’16.

She is a member of the Class of '98.

Todd Smith '13 is the great-grandson of June Thompson (Class of 1913).

## POSSESSIVES

To form the possessive of a singular noun ending in *-s*, add an apostrophe and *s* ('s). All proper names ending in *-s* form their possessive by adding 's:

The boss's birthday

The bus's wheels

The witness's testimony

Correct:

Martha's Vineyard

Seven Years' War

They reviewed Atticus's thesis.

The boss's birthday

James's dog

Do not use an apostrophe ('s) when there is no possessive. This is a common problem with decades and numbers. The only exception comes when adding an "s" without an apostrophe would spell a word; use an apostrophe in these cases.

I am a child of the 1980s.

The temperature this weekend will be in the 90s.

The I's on his report card stand for incomplete.

## CONTRACTIONS

Contractions are shortened forms of a word or phrase with an apostrophe replacing the omitted letters.

Do not = don't

It was = 'twas

## ARCHAEOLOGY

Randolph College uses this spelling rather than "archeology."

## BLACK

Acceptable for a person of the black race, according to the AP Stylebook. The word can be used interchangeably with African-American if you are sure the person is an American with African heritage. (See also, African-American)

## BRACKETS

Brackets are commonly used to set off the writer's explanation within a quote, such as [sic] (which means intentionally so written, telling the reader that the writer is reproducing certain words exactly as they appeared or were said). Brackets can also be used when a word is inserted. Most other cases call for parentheses. Because brackets are distracting and interrupt the flow of a sentence, they should be used sparingly.

The girl said, "I seed [sic] a rattlesnake."

"I went to the [convenience] store, but I couldn't find the salt," he said.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Randolph College is governed by the Board of Trustees, which should be capitalized when the full name is used. On second reference, the capitalized word Board may suffice. There are 28 to 30 trustees.

The Board of Trustees met Thursday to make a decision.

The Board heard a report from the president.

The trustees' feedback was positive.

## BUILDINGS, CAMPUS LANDMARKS, ORGANIZATIONS, ETC.

When using the official name of offices and departments, campus buildings and landmarks, and Randolph College programs and organizations, capitalize each word except short, unimportant words such as “and” or “of.” Below are many, but not all, of these names. Acronyms should be used only where indicated.

Academic Services Center (ASC)

Alice Ashley Jack Lounge

Alice’s E-Cade

Anne Jeter Ribble Lounge

Bell Hall

Career Development Center

Center for Student Research

Center for Ancient Drama

Chandler Student Lounge

Cheatham Dining Hall

Claire Noyes Cox Indoor Riding Center

The Dell

Engagement Tower

Even

Even Post

Founders’ Day

Grosvenor Apartment Complex (Grosvenor Apartments)

*Hail, Muse! Etc.*

Gravely-Hampson Commons (Hampson Commons)

Harold G. Leggett Building (Thoresen Theatre is on the third floor)

Harriet Fitzgerald Room

Heath Student Government Suite

Honor System

Houston Memorial Chapel

Lindner Alumnae Suite

Lipscomb Library

Maier Museum of Art at Randolph College (Note: The full name should always be used on first reference. "The Maier" may be used on subsequent references.)

Main Hall

Margaret Ellis Hall (In Martin Science Building)

Martin Science Building (Inside: Ellis Hall and Ethyl Center)

Mary's Garden

Michels Plaza (Please note there is no apostrophe)

Moore Hall

Nichols Theatre

Odd

Odd Tree

Office of College Relations (OCR)

Pearl S. Buck Award

The Pines House

Psychology Building

Presser Hall

Randolph Athletics and Dance Center (RAD)

Randolph Plan

Skeller

Smith Memorial Building (Inside: Smith Hall Theatre, Alice Ashley Jack Lounge)

Student Center

*Sundial* (italicize the newspaper name, not the monument)

Terrell Health and Counseling Centers

The Ethyl Science and Mathematics Resource Center (in Martin Science Building)

The Greek Play

The Mabel K. Whiteside Greek Theatre (Note: Randolph's Greek Theatre should never be referred to as an amphitheatre.)

The Randolph-Macon Woman's College Alumnae and Randolph College Alumni Association (Alumnae and Alumni Association or Association)

The Red Brick Wall

Thoresen Hall (inside: Admissions Office)

Thoresen Theatre (in the Leggett Building)

Wanda WildCat (please note that WildCat includes a capital W and capital C. These represent "Woman's College" and are a tribute to our history as R-MWC.)

Webb Hall

West Hall

Winfree Observatory

Wright Hall

## RESIDENCE HALLS

In official Randolph College publications, "residence halls" is preferred over "dorms."

## CAPITALIZATION

### CAPITALIZE NAMES OF PEOPLE

Jack Walters

Susan Queue

## CAPITALIZE LANGUAGES

French class, Spanish population, German shepherd

She plans to study chemistry if she can just pass her English class.

## CAPITALIZE NAMES OF THINGS

Proper and complete names of things should be capitalized. At Randolph College, we include full department names, complete course names, and proper names of committees and programs. However, informal names of departments are not capitalized.

Examples:

She teaches in the Department of Biology.

Her students enjoy taking classes from the biology department.

The Office of the President holds open hours every afternoon.

The president's office holds open hours every afternoon.

## RANDOLPH COLLEGE'S STYLE

Capitalize the word College (even as it stands alone) when it stands in place of the name Randolph College, but not when it refers to colleges in general. (See College)

Example:

The College continues to garner recognition for being an excellent liberal arts college.

The Randolph student believes her college education is important to success in the science field.

(See also College)

## CAPITALIZE GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS BUT NOT DIRECTIONS

Southwestern Virginia

Central Virginia

the South

The north side of campus

#### DO NOT CAPITALIZE TYPES OF MUSIC

She loves jazz and blues singers.

#### DO NOT CAPITALIZE SEASONS

spring, winter, fall, summer

#### CATALOG

Randolph uses this spelling of catalog (not “catalogue”) unless referring to an art catalogue.

#### CHAIR

“Chair” is an acceptable reference for this leadership position rather than chairwoman or chairman.

#### CITATIONS

Business communications and publications rarely need citations; however, if you need citations, we suggest that you choose a method that fits the type of publication and the works cited. The key is consistency within the communication.

#### COACH

When it is a title, use *coach* as you would *professor* in front of a name.

He is the head coach of the men’s basketball team.

The coach, Julie Downing, spoke with parents after the game.

After his meeting, Coach Long ran laps with the team.

## COLLEGE

Capitalize the word College, even as it stands alone, when it stands in place of the name Randolph College but not when it refers to colleges in general.

Visitors to Randolph's campus said the College's environment was warm and inviting.

Other colleges don't participate in the consortium.

He spoke for the College's administration at the conference.

(See also Capitalization)

## COLON

The colon tells the reader to keep reading. It can precede a quotation, list, explanation, or main clause. A colon should be preceded by a complete sentence. A colon should not be used after words like *such as*, between a verb and the rest of the sentence, or between a preposition and its object.

We will discuss three popular music styles today: jazz, blues, and rock and roll.

She had only one thing to say: "It's over."

Incorrect:

Emily's favorite hobbies are: reading and singing.

## COMMA

Commas should reflect a sentence's underlying grammatical structure. Many of us were taught that commas should reflect the pauses we make in speaking, but this approach leads to text littered with disruptive and unnecessary commas. The trend for many years has been toward "open punctuation," which means fewer commas. Many times the best approach is to consult the handful of widely agreed-upon rules and, if doubt still remains, then place commas according to natural pauses in speech.

Take note that Randolph College style uses the Oxford comma, which is placed between the last two items listed in a series.

USE A COMMA...

**In a compound sentence**—a sentence with two or more independent clauses joined by a conjunction. If a dependent clause (i.e. not a complete sentence) comes in the first sentence, it is set off with a comma.

Are we really interested in justice, or are we just trying to get the upper hand? (two independent clauses)

She drove to Richmond, and he spent the day watching television. (two independent clauses)

When a title appears before a name, it is seen as part of the name. (one dependent clause, one independent clause)

### **In a series**

I ate apples, bananas, and grapes.

When you arrive, open the door, come into the foyer, and have a seat at the table.

**After an adverbial phrase at the beginning of a sentence**, unless it's really short. Do use a comma to prevent misreading; don't use a comma with phrases of time and place.

After reading the note, Jane turned pale.

On May 3 she attended her sister's graduation.

To Sammy, Dickinson's poetry was a form of escape.

**With coordinate adjectives** (two or more adjectives, each modifying the noun). Hint: If the word *and* can be placed between the words, a comma is needed.

She had a shiny, red car.

She spent long, hard hours studying for her exams.

**To set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical phrases and clauses.** Hint: If the sentence can have the same meaning without the phrase, set it off with commas.

Non-essential: Mrs. Jones, a graduate of Yale, will conduct a workshop.

Essential: The woman who is leading the workshop is a graduate of Yale.

**When to use which.** Note: A *which* clause is a nonessential clause; a *that* clause is essential.

Restrictive, no commas: The class that she is teaching is in Presser Hall.

Nonrestrictive, set off with commas: The class, which is in Presser Hall, has 35 students.

**When a city and state or a complete date comes in the middle of a sentence.**

The College was founded in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1891.

He left on June 3, 1997, and never came back.

He left in 1997 and never came back.

**With appositives**, words or phrases that represent or rename a noun.

A very intelligent student, Bill did well in most of his classes.

My sisters, Sara and Jane, will meet us at the airport. (If you have only two sisters.)

BUT if the appositive tells you which one, or has a restrictive function, then it does not take commas.

Spielberg's movie *E.T.* was one of his most profitable.

My son Sam was the first to come to the door.

My sisters Sara and Jane will meet us at the airport, but my younger sister, Janeen, will not be there.

DO NOT USE A COMMA...

**With a compound predicate**, a sentence with two verbs that share a subject. In the example below, *tried* and *found* both refer to the actions of Jane:

On Wednesday, Jane tried to see her professor but found that he was out of town.

The cat chased the squirrel and was almost run over by a car.

**After an introductory phrase that immediately precedes the verb it modifies.**

Out of the car stepped the belle of the ball.

**To connect two independent clauses** only with a comma. You must use a conjunction with a comma, or a semicolon, or split the sentence into two smaller parts.

Incorrect: He went into the store, she followed him.

Accepted:

She knew the answer, but she didn't raise her hand. (Two independent clauses connected with a comma and a conjunction)

She knew the answer; she had read the assignment. (Two independent clauses connected with a semicolon)

## CONTRACTIONS

As a general rule, contractions are acceptable in official College publications such as *Randolph* magazine; however, they are not recommended in formal letters, etc.

Contractions may be used in advertising copy, promotional materials, or on the blog or website as appropriate.

## COURSE NAMES

Course names (the formal names) are capitalized only when the official full name is used, but they are not italicized or in quotes. Languages are always capitalized.

She is taking Analytical Chemistry, American History to 1865, and a French class.

He hates his math class.

She loves the Introduction to Theatre class that Professor Wade is teaching.

## COURTESY TITLES

Courtesy titles include Mr., Mrs., Ms., and Dr. Do not mix courtesy titles and professional degrees. Save the use of Dr. for medical doctors. Courtesy titles should not be used in official College publications. For formal non-publication writing, the best way to mention professors in the second reference is to capitalize Professor followed by the last name. In more informal writing, depending on the audience, a professor can be referred to by his or her first or last name on second reference. In official College publications, use the last name of the person on second

reference. If the exact title of a person is necessary for the context, use Associate Professor and the like. (See Dr. or Ph.D. and Titles of People)

Incorrect:

Mr. Paul Irwin, Ph.D.

Correct:

Professor of Mathematics Paul Irwin received an award.

Professor Irwin is also the liaison for the Reading University program.

Ronald Gettinger is an associate professor of biology at Randolph College. Gettinger is known for making material fun for his upper-level classes.

The students worked with classics professor Joe Smith on extensive research.

## LETTERS

Use courtesy titles in letters, especially formal and business letters.

Dear Mr. Smith:

I would like to bring your attention to Mrs. Jones' excellent work.

When referring to students, first names are acceptable on second reference in non-official College publications. For official publications, use the last name on second reference.

Susan Queue is a first-year student at Randolph College. Susan has learned the value of leadership in a very short time.

## DASHES

Most communications use several types of dashes in addition to the hyphen. Two of the most commonly used are the em dash (the width of a capital M) and the en dash (the width of a capital N).

### EM DASH

The em dash (—), the primary form of dash, is used to emphasize information that follows and provides a stronger pause than a comma. Dashes should not be surrounded by spaces.

MAC keystroke: shift+option+hyphen

Microsoft Word: type two hyphens immediately after a word (with no spaces) and continue typing your document. The double hyphen will change to an em dash.

USE THE EM DASH...

**For abrupt changes in the sentence:**

Can she—will she—make the decision?

**For amplifying, explanatory, and digressive elements.** (Could also use commas here)

He had spent several hours on the plan—a plan that would put an end to his problems.

**For setting off a defining element within a sentence.** Can introduce in the same way a colon does.

She only invited three men—those who could appreciate the movie—to go with her.

He wanted that doggy in the window—the one with the waggly tail.

EN DASH

The en dash – is longer than a hyphen but shorter than an em dash.

For inclusive dates and times. Use in the same way that you would use the words *through* or *to*.

Note: in more formal writing, including publications and web pages, if *from*, *of*, or a similar word precedes the dates or times, DO NOT use an en dash; use *to*, *through*, or *and*.

The play will be at Randolph College September 1–13.

The dinner is 6:30–7:30 p.m.

The committee will meet from 3 to 5 p.m.

To hyphenate words that are already hyphenated.

Quasi-public–quasi-judicial judicial

Non-European–non-Asian population

(See also Hyphenation)

For additional help in typing dashes when autocorrect does not function as expected, see Special Characters.

## DATES

Dates should not be abbreviated in running text or body copy. In tables, lists, and other instances where space is limited, dates may be abbreviated with numerals (day/month/year) or the long months may be abbreviated: Nov. Dec. Normally, May, June, and July are not abbreviated.

The symposium is scheduled for October 24, 1998.

He arrived on July 10 and left on August 12.

The American Culture summer program ends in July 2000.

## SPANS OF TIME OR NUMBERS

In time spans involving years, use the four-digit year/en dash/two-digit year format unless the years span a century. In this case, use all four digits for both years. For both years and numbers, when the first number ends with more than one zero, the complete number should follow.

Incorrect:

The rules went into effect during the 1998-9 academic year.

This occurred in the '99-'00 academic year.

Look for information on pages 100-2.

Accepted:

This is the 1999-2000 academic year.

The Student Government Association approved new rules during the 2000-2001 academic year.

Smith Hall Theatre renovations are scheduled for 2001-02.

They met weekly from September 2007-February 2008.

## DEGREES

See Academic Degrees and Honors.

## DEPARTMENTS

Uppercase the formal, proper name of a department or office; lowercase the name otherwise. In most cases the formal name of Randolph College departments is in this format: Department of Department Name. If you turn it around, which is usually better in running text, it would read: the department name department. Of course, some departments will always have at least one capitalized word in their names. (e.g. Department of English, English department.)

She was asked to report to the Office of the Dean of the College.

She reported to the dean's office.

He was a professor in Randolph College's Department of Chemistry.

She works in the athletic department.

## E-MAIL

Lowercase and hyphenate in running text: e-mail. This is an evolving word and there are many different styles. This is the spelling indicated by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

## EM DASH, EN DASH

See Dash or Appendix A.

## ELLIPSES

Ellipses, or a series of three dots (...), indicate that you have omitted part of a sentence. The part of the sentence that is omitted governs the number of periods, i.e. if you omit something mid-sentence, use three dots; if you omit something at the end of your sentence, use four dots, three for the ellipsis and one for the terminal period. These rules apply most often to quoted matter.

**Within a sentence:** three periods with spaces on either side.

I am leaving something ... out of this sentence.

**At the end of the sentence:** three periods and terminal punctuation. (This usually translates to four periods.)

I am slicing off the end of this sentence ....

**Between sentences:** Include terminal punctuation and add three periods.

This sentence is over but not complete .... And this sentence is picking up where the other left off.

E.G.

The term e.g. means *for example* and stands for the Latin *exempli gratia*. The term e.g. should always be lowercase and confined to parenthetical use, separated by commas, em dashes, or parentheses. In most cases it is preferable to avoid the abbreviated form. See “i.e.”

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

See Nondiscrimination statement

ETC.

Avoid the use of the Latin *et cetera* and its abbreviation, etc., which mean *and the rest*. The use of etc. suggests that the writer doesn't know what etc. really represents or is just too lazy to say.

## FRACTIONS

Write out fractions and hyphenate them in normal running text. In number-heavy text or in tables, numerical representations such as  $\frac{1}{2}$  are acceptable.

Proceed two-thirds of a mile and take the first left.

One-half of the team has been suspended.

## FIRST-YEAR

Students entering Randolph College are called first-year students or, in informal uses, first-years. *First-year* is almost always hyphenated when referring to a Randolph student.

## HYPHENS

Hyphens have many uses and are therefore often overused. They are used to show a connection, either between words or between syllables. Hyphens are used to form compound words in instances where not doing so would cause misunderstanding.

Another way to decide when a hyphen is needed is to consider how the words are used. Two words working together as an adjective modifier are hyphenated. If in doubt, consult a dictionary.

#### COMPOUND MODIFIERS

She is a first-year student.

He is concentrating on 18th- and 20th-century art.

That business is a wholly owned subsidiary of a state-of-the-art computer company. (Note: words ending in *ly* are not hyphenated.)

Traffic in the Baltimore-Washington corridor will only grow in the next 10 years.

#### PHONE NUMBERS

Use hyphens in phone numbers: 434-947-8100. The area code parentheses are no longer used because some areas of the United States require callers to dial the area code for all calls, even local calls.

#### I.E.

i.e., the abbreviation for the Latin *id est*, meaning *that is*, should always be lowercase and confined to parenthetical use, separated by commas, em dashes, or parentheses. In most cases it is preferable to use the written-out version to avoid confusion.

#### INTERNET

While Internet used to always be capitalized, it is now acceptable to use the lowercase form. (The same is true for web.) When writing an internet address, it is not necessary to put *http://* before the address.

Example: She found that information on the internet.

(While it has previously been capitalized, it is now acceptable to use a lowercase “web.”)

It is acceptable to write website instead of web site.

See Web

## ITALICS OR QUOTES?

See Titles.

## LATIN WORDS

Some foreign words in English text should be set in italics. This decision should be based on how familiar the word is to the reader. For example, the commonly used Latin words listed below do not need to be set in italics. Also, most modern readers know the meaning of *alma mater*. But few readers outside the Randolph College family know the meaning of *Vita abundantior*, so it should be set in italics. *Vita abundantior*, the College Motto, means “the life more abundant.” The “V” should be capitalized but “abundantior” should not.

## COMMONLY USED LATIN WORDS

The following should not be italicized.

Pl. masc., pl. fem., sing. masc., sing. fem.

Alumni, alumnae, alumnus, alumna, emeriti, emeritae, emeritus, emerita, magna, summa cum laude

## LETTERS

See Addresses. For letterhead and layout information, see the *Graphic Style Guide*.

## LISTS

Here are a few general guidelines from the *N.Y. Public Library Writer’s Guide*:

If the introductory phrase forms a complete sentence, it may end with a colon. Otherwise, it may end in a comma. An incomplete introductory phrase before a vertical list may end with an em dash.

In a list within running text, items should be separated by commas and do not need to be capitalized. Numbers in parentheses can be added if the order of the list is important.

A displayed list, or vertical list, should have at least three items. The list should be numbered if the order is important. Otherwise, bullets can set off list items. If the list items are complete sentences and follow a complete introductory sentence, each list item should be capitalized and ended with a period. If the list items are incomplete sentences that finish an incomplete introductory phrase, they should not be capitalized and should end with a comma or, if list items include commas, a semicolon. The last item in the list should end with a period.

Incorrect:

Students tried to: (1) foster school spirit, (2) promote academics, and (3) encourage ethics.

Professors set out a number of ground rules, including:

- No chewing gum in class.
- Be on time to class.

Correct:

Students wanting to receive a RISE award should (1) talk to a faculty member, (2) develop a budget for their project, (3) write a proposal, and (4) submit the proposal to their academic department.

Professors set out a number of ground rules:

- Students would not be allowed to chew gum in class.
- Students should be on time to class.
- Students who plagiarized would fail the course.

All of the students who attended the event

1. sang a song, even though most of them could not sing well;
2. painted banners to show off at Homecoming;
3. enjoyed cookies, which were overflowing with chocolate chips.

## LOGOS

The College's logo is a design that includes the Bell Tower and the College name. This logo may be used on promotional materials and merchandise. Please make it prominent on all pieces. However, it may not be used on any materials without the wordmark. Other guidelines for use of the College's academic logo are found in the Brand Identity Guide:

[http://www.randolphcollege.edu/collegerelations/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2016/01/randolph\\_brand\\_identity\\_standards.pdf](http://www.randolphcollege.edu/collegerelations/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2016/01/randolph_brand_identity_standards.pdf)

Please consult the Office of College Relations for appropriate files and assistance with brand standards. Please also note that the College seal is not the academic logo, and should only be used with permission of the secretary of the Board of Trustees.

The College also has a series of athletic logos, including the Randolph monogram, scratch, and mascot. Please see the link above for rules regarding the use of these logos.

See also: Seal

## MAJORS

There is no need to capitalize majors. Do capitalize full names of programs, however.

He is a religious studies major. He participated in the American Culture Program last spring.

## MONTHS

Do not abbreviate months in regular text. Months may be abbreviated in tables. Accepted abbreviations are Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. Likewise, days of the week should not be abbreviated in regular text.

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Randolph College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion (Title VII), ethnic origin (Title VI), handicap (Section 504), sexual orientation, or age in the administration of its educational and employment policies, and maintains such nondiscriminatory policy in all aspects of operation.

Inquiries concerning the application of these policies may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, the Dean of the College, at 434-947-8126, or the Section 504 Coordinator, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, at 434-947-8112, in Lynchburg, Virginia 24503-1555.

## NUMBERS AND NUMERALS

In most cases, spell out numbers from zero to nine (unless they are used as percentages) and use numerals for numbers 10 and over.

See also Ages

## ONLINE

Online is the accepted spelling.

## PERCENT

Percentages are most often expressed in numerals. This rule is an exception to the general rules for numbers and numerals. In running text spell out the word percent (but, again, not the number). In tables or texts that have many numbers, use the symbol %.

We will get a 7 percent increase in our salaries...in our craziest dreams.

Nearly 10 percent of Randolph College graduates are science majors.

Only about 55 percent of the adult population voted in the 2012 election.

The Pew Research Center estimates that 61 percent of Americans own a smartphone.

## PROFESSOR

Never abbreviate professor. This word should be lowercase unless it is part of a formal title or before the name. (See Dr. or Ph.D.)

Professor of Mathematics Paul Irwin

Paul Irwin is a math professor.

## PRIME TIME and Adult Programs

Prime Time refers to the educational program for Randolph College students 25 and older.

## PUNCTUATION

See separate entries in this style guide on apostrophes, ampersands, colons, commas, dashes, ellipses, hyphens, and semicolons.

## SOME GENERAL RULES

**Place one space (not two) after a period** (between sentences).

**Punctuation goes inside quotation marks** in most instances.

**Make the punctuation look the same** as the word it goes with. If the last word of a sentence is set in italics, set the punctuation in italics.

**Don't add additional periods** if a sentence ends with an acronym.

**Keep punctuation inside quotes at the end of a sentence** unless the punctuation is not part of the quote. In most cases, only a question mark or exclamation mark might go outside a quote that ends a sentence.

Examples:

The students shouted the College motto, "*Vita abundantior!*"

Do students know what we mean by "*Vita abundantior*"?

Bill Timmons was excited to receive his M.A.

## RANDOLPH COLLEGE NAME

Spell the name out on first use in any document. Later, use *Randolph* or *the College*. RC is only acceptable in casual reference, such as in conversation or internal emails, but not in any official College publications or communications.

R(M-W)C is never an acceptable abbreviation.

R-MWC may be used as an abbreviation of Randolph-Macon Woman's College on second reference, but do not use Randolph-Macon or Macon, to prevent confusion with Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. Make sure that R-MWC does not get broken at the end of a line.

## THE RANDOLPH PLAN

The Randolph Plan refers to the process through which the College educates students, providing them with a unique, individualized education that prepares them for any career or life they choose. It is a plan that integrates academics, study abroad, leadership opportunities, athletics, co-curricular activities, and career planning. Each student works with his or her advisor and the Career Development Center to form and complete a personalized Randolph Plan.

## RISE

The correct name of the program is the Randolph Innovative Student Experience. When writing something that may be read by an audience that is unfamiliar with the program (such as on the College's website or an email to prospective students), spell out the name first and then write the abbreviation in parentheses. It is acceptable to use RISE on the first reference for internal audiences. "Program" or "grant" or other words that might appear immediately afterward should not be capitalized. Do not make "Randolph" possessive in the name of the program.

Incorrect:

Many students are applying for Randolph's Innovative Student Experience Program.

Acceptable:

Many students take advantage of the Randolph Innovative Student Experience (RISE) program.

She decided to apply for a Randolph Innovative Student Experience (RISE) grant.

#### SAID or SAYS

The preferred attribution in official Randolph College publications is "said." In certain cases, present tense is allowed, but as a general rule, all quote attributions should be in the past tense. While an occasional deviation, such as "commented," is acceptable, "said" is preferable to ensure ease of reading.

Correct:

"The guest lecturer added depth to our discussion of the topic," said Sue Smith '16.

Incorrect:

"The guest lecturer added depth to our discussion of the topic," says Sue Smith '16.

#### SEAL

The use of the College seal requires permission of the secretary of the Board of Trustees. The seal can never be distorted or changed in any way.

When the seal is used in a document that will be delivered electronically, the document should be converted to a PDF, making it less convenient for someone to alter a document with the seal to emulate an official College communication.

Please contact OCR for the proper files.

See Logos

## SEMICOLON

A semicolon is used to connect two independent clauses that could stand alone as two sentences but are closely related. It tells the reader, “Slow down, don’t stop.” The semicolon, unlike other forms of punctuation, goes outside of quotations marks and parentheses.

### MOST COMMON USES FOR SEMICOLONS

**Between main clauses**—with or without a coordinating conjunction.

The party was a great success; and the revelries went on into the early morning.

She went straight to bed; it was said she was never the same again.

The dinner was very sparse; the family had only bread and bacon.

**Between main clauses with a conjunctive adverb** (like *however*, *also*, and *besides*)

She was an excellent student; however, she failed because she refused to attend class.

**In a series containing internal commas**

He made her a wonderful breakfast of ham, eggs, and toast; did all the laundry; and even scrubbed the kitchen floor.

She is travelling to Cheyenne, Wyoming; Bismarck, South Dakota; and Lansing, Michigan.

## SPACES

Use one space between the period that terminates one sentence and the first letter of the next sentence. Two spaces were used between sentences on typewriters because the typewriter advanced the same amount of space for each letter. However, computer fonts are spaced such that the additional space is unnecessary. Extra spaces now make the design process tedious.

## SPECIAL CHARACTERS

Several styles in this book require the use of special characters, including the apostrophe or close-single-quote ’, the en dash – and the em dash —. Unfortunately, autocorrect options may

help or hinder in your attempt to write these characters. If you have trouble getting your word processor to type one of these particular characters, you can use keyboard shortcuts.

### **On Windows**

Hold down Alt while typing one number at a time on your keyboard's number pad:

Apostrophe/close single quote      Alt + 0146

En Dash      Alt + 0150

Em Dash      Alt + 0151

### Mac

Hold down the following key combinations

Apostrophe/close single quote      Option + Shift + right-bracket

En Dash      Option + Shift + hyphen

Em Dash      Option + hyphen

### SPLIT INFINITIVES

Split infinitives call on the writer to compare correct grammar with how a sentence sounds. One splits an infinitive when an adverb is placed between "to" and a verb. While splitting infinitives often results in weak sentence construction, it is not absolutely forbidden.

*To boldly go* is split.

*To go boldly* is not split.

*To strongly object* is split.

*To object strongly* is not split.

### THEATRE

Randolph College uses this spelling of theatre, rather than theater. It is also part of the name of the Thoresen Theatre.

## TIME

In event programs, time is generally expressed in numerals followed by A.M. and P.M. set in small caps. In written text, a.m. and p.m. are acceptable. Unless the exact minutes are needed, times can be expressed without the :00 as follows: 3 A.M., 7 P.M., 4:30 P.M. (note spacing and use of periods). The :00 may be used in a listing of times, such as in the schedule for an event, but should not be used in running text.

## EXPRESSING INTERVALS OF TIME

In running text, express intervals of time (such as the beginning and end time for an event) with the word “to” between them. In a schedule listing, use an en dash – between the times. In either case, if the listed times are both in the morning or evening, only use the a.m. / p.m. designation on the second time.

Examples:

The seminar will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The schedule will be as follows:

11–11:15 a.m.          Welcome

11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.          Keynote lecture

12:30–1:30 p.m.          Lunch

Times are only written out in very formal uses, such as invitations and then the written number is accompanied by the word o'clock.

President Bateman requests the pleasure of your company at half-past seven o'clock.

The event is scheduled in Smith Hall Theatre at 5 p.m.

## AVOID REDUNDANCY

*Noon or midnight, not 12 noon or 12 midnight.*

*Half-past six o'clock, not 6:30 o'clock.*

The party is from 8 to 11 p.m.

She will be unavailable from noon until 4:30 p.m.

## TITLES OF PEOPLE

### JOB TITLES

See **Courtesy Titles**. When used in a sentence, professional titles should be uppercase before a person's name or lowercase after. When a title appears before a person's name, it is seen as part of the name. When it appears after or on its own, it is seen as the name of the job, not the person, so it should not be capitalized. A professional title without an associated name should be lowercase in running text, unless it is a named position (e.g. an endowed chair) and then it is always uppercase. When used in lists, on business cards and stationery, or otherwise set off from body copy, professional titles can be capitalized even after the name.

Note that "professor" is not capitalized before a faculty member's name because it is not the official job title, but if is used in place of the professor's full name (such as in Professor Johnson) then it is capitalized. The rule remains the same for "president," with one exception: use of a capitalized "President" is always acceptable when referring to the President of the United States.

Associate Professor of English Mara Amster talked with psychology professor Holly Tatum.

Dean of the College Carl Girelli.

Carl Girelli is the dean of the College.

She is the chair of the chemistry department.

The President gave a press conference in the White House briefing room.

President Bradley W. Bateman loves bow ties.

The president of Randolph College loves bow ties.

Beth Schwartz is The Catherine Ehrman Thoresen '23 and William E. Thoresen Professor of Psychology. (In this case, the writer must not put her title before her name because the reader might not be able to figure out who is the actual professor.)

JR. / SR.

When the titles Jr. and Sr. are used in a sentence, they must be set off by commas, unless in case of different personal preference.

James Smith, Jr., will lead the panel discussion.

## TITLES OF THINGS

As a general rule, longer works—movies, books, series—should be italicized, shorter works—episodes, chapters, poems—should be in quotation marks. Read on for details.

## ITALICIZE

**Titles and subtitles of published works**, e.g. books, newspapers, magazines.

*The Sundial, The Illiad.*

His letter was published in *The New York Times*.

**Long poems published separately**

*Paradise Lost*

**Titles of movies or plays**

The students watched *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* in their dorms and then went to see *The Importance of Being Earnest* at a local playhouse.

**Television or radio series**

*This American Life, The Office*

**Operas and other long musical compositions**

*Porgy and Bess, Don Giovanni*

**Names of paintings, drawings, statues**

*Mona Lisa*

**Selected special events**

The annual symposium *On Being American*

## QUOTATION MARKS

**Articles and features in periodicals and newspapers**

The article “President Impeached” was an example of poor journalism.

**Chapter titles**

“When Trains Collide” was Chapter 10 in his book.

**Short stories**

“Christmas Day in the Morning” by Pearl S. Buck and “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner were two of his favorites.

### **Essays**

Her first grade essay, “My Summer Vacation,” received an A+.

### **Speeches, lectures, papers**

“The Taste and Smell and Sound of America”

### **Workshops and panel discussions**

Professor d’Entremont moderated the panel discussion, “Defining and Defending Liberty in a Democratic Society.”

### **Poems**

“The Raven” is a spooky poem.

### **TV show episodes that are not a series or a movie**

Her favorite episode of *Hill Street Blues* is “The Homecoming.”

### **Song titles**

His favorite Elvis song is “Love Me Tender.”

CAPITALIZE ONLY

### **Course names**

He signed up for the course American History to 1900.

She really wants to take Introduction to Music Composition this semester.

### **Common short signs**

The No Smoking sign was removed by a vandal.

U.S.

U.S. should be used as an adjective. When not used as an adjective, the country’s name should be written out.

I am a U.S. citizen.

I live in the United States.

## VITA ABUNDANTIOR

*Vita abundantior*, the College motto, means “the life more abundant.” It is set in italics because it is a Latin phrase that is not universally known. The proper usage includes a capital “V” in Vita and lowercase “a” in abundantior, unless the motto is set off by itself. See also Latin Words.

## WEB

While it has previously been capitalized, it is now acceptable to use a lowercase “web.”

It is acceptable to write website instead of web site.

## WEBSITE ADDRESSES

The URL of the College’s website should always be lowercase: [www.randolphcollege.edu](http://www.randolphcollege.edu)

When applicable, web addresses should be followed by punctuation marks in formal writing. For example:

The College’s website is [www.randolphcollege.edu](http://www.randolphcollege.edu).

Go to [www.randolphcollege.edu](http://www.randolphcollege.edu), then click on the Admissions tab.

Keep the entire web address on one line in your document, even if this requires breaking one line early and starting the address on the next line. If the length of the address requires breaking the address into multiple lines, do not place a hyphen at the end of each line—readers might assume the hyphen is part of the address. Alternately, use a URL shortener (such as bit.ly) to shorten the length of the URL to fewer characters.

The www. at the beginning of an address may be omitted if the address will still work without it. The http:// should never be used, and https:// should only be used if it is crucial that the reader be directed to a secure site.

Incorrect:

Go to RandolphCollege.edu.

For more information, go to [www.randolphcollege.edu/academics](http://www.randolphcollege.edu/academics).

Visit  
[randolphcollege.edu/tic-kets](http://randolphcollege.edu/tic-kets).

Acceptable:

Visit [randolphcollege.edu/academics](http://randolphcollege.edu/academics) for more information.

Visit  
[randolphcollege.edu/tickets](http://randolphcollege.edu/tickets).

(If it is the final sentence in a paragraph)

For more information, go to [randolphcollege.edu/academics](http://randolphcollege.edu/academics).

**WILDCAT**

Wanda WildCat is the College mascot. She prefers a capital C in WildCat, which is one word.