Communication and Style Guide

Please use this guide when writing letters, memos, fliers, reports, email, Internet content, and other written materials for the college.

This guide covers some of the most frequently asked questions about grammar, punctuation, capitalization, official names, and formats. Please use the college’s preferred spellings, titles, and word choices. Your cooperation will help the college present a consistent and unified image to the public and help it accurately convey its mission and goals.

Should you have a question about this material or other information not covered, please call Nathan Hardin, ext. 5206.

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Abbreviations

In general, abbreviate only when you must because abbreviations can easily create confusion. Of course, abbreviations are often necessary and helpful in tables, charts, and signs or when you repeat a name frequently.

Academic degrees and honors

The following list includes many frequently used abbreviations for academic degrees. Note that no space is needed between letters. If a publication has a mix of these, use the college’s style, which is to have no periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Associate in Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOC</td>
<td>American Board of Opticianry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADN</td>
<td>Associate Degree in Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Associate in Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS</td>
<td>Associate in Applied Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSN</td>
<td>Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Certified Dental Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDO</td>
<td>Certified Dispensing Optician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDT</td>
<td>Certified Dental Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>Certified Nurse Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNMW</td>
<td>Certified Nurse Midwife (RN with advanced training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNOR</td>
<td>Certified Nurse Operating Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Certified Optician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTA</td>
<td>Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTA/L</td>
<td>Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant/Licensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPhT</td>
<td>Certified Pharmacy Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRT</td>
<td>Certified Respiratory Therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRTT</td>
<td>Certified Respiratory Therapy Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CST</td>
<td>Certified Surgical Technologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDS</td>
<td>Doctor of Dental Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMD</td>
<td>Doctor of Medical Dentistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdD</td>
<td>Doctor of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JD</td>
<td>Juris Doctor (Doctor of Law)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDO</td>
<td>Licensed Dispensing Optician (what we actually are in NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LO</td>
<td>Licensed Optician (what we tend to use in NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPN</td>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Master of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Master of Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Medicine Doctor (Doctor of Medicine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Master of Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MS    Master of Science
MSN   Master’s Degree in Nursing
NP    Nurse Practitioner (RN with advanced training)
OTR   Occupational Therapist Registered
OTR/L Occupational Therapist Registered/Licensed
PharmD  Doctor of Pharmacy
PhD   Philosophiae Doctor (Doctor of Philosophy)
RA    Restorative Aide
RDH   Registered Dental Hygienist
RN    Registered Nurse
RPh   Registered Pharmacist
RRT   Registered Respiratory Therapist
ST    Surgical Technologist

The word *degree* should not follow an abbreviation of the degree.

Correct: He has a BA in history.
Incorrect: He has a BA degree in history.

When referring to an academic degree in more general or shortened terms, capital letters are not needed.

Correct: She has a doctorate in philosophy.
Correct: She holds a master’s in the subject.
Correct: She holds an associate’s degree.
Incorrect: She has a Doctorate in philosophy.

An apostrophe and *s* are needed when shortening degrees to *master’s*, *bachelor’s* and *associate’s*.

When using the following honors, lowercase and italicize each word:

* cum laude
  magna cum laude
  summa cum laude

**Months**

In text, spell out the months of the year.

In charts, tables, lists, research data, or schedules, you may abbreviate the months as follows if you include the dates: *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.* Never abbreviate *March, April, May, June, or July.* (Note: These months must be abbreviated in the schedule to meet format requirements.)
When a period of time is identified in text by the month and year, no internal comma is necessary.

Text Example: The workshop will be held in May 1994.

Names with Jr., Sr., and III

The abbreviations Jr., Sr., and III are used ONLY when a person’s full name is given. Only the abbreviations Jr. and Sr. are set off by commas. Note that no comma is placed before or after III.

Examples: Mr. James Jefferson, Jr., was once governor.
Dexter Harrison III spoke at the commencement.

Exception: Phail Wynn, Jr. Student Services Center (Dr. Wynn chose for no comma to be used after Jr. in the title of his building.)

The abbreviation Esq. (for Esquire) and other titles such as Mr., Mrs., and Dr. should not appear with any other title or with abbreviations indicating scholastic degrees.

Correct: Ford Maddux, AB, PhD
Incorrect: Mr. Ford Maddux, AB, PhD
Correct: George Gray, MD
Incorrect: Dr. George Gray, MD
Incorrect: President Dr. Bill Ingram
Correct: John L. Smith, Esq.
James A. Jones, Jr., Esq.
Incorrect: Mr. John L. Smith, Esq.
John L. Smith Esq., AM

Abbreviated titles preceding names

Unless preceded by the, abbreviate honorable, reverend, and monsignor when followed by the first name, initials, or title. Note “the Honorable” is used for any elected official presently serving or has served in the past.

Correct: Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
the Reverend Dr. King
Rev. Dr. King
the Honorable Elihu Root
Hon. Elihu Root
the Honorable Mr. Root
Abbreviations of legislative titles

Use Rep., Reps., Sen., and Sens. before names, and follow with party affiliation. When not followed by a name, lowercase and spell out.

Examples: Sen. Kay Hagan, D-NC
         The senator spoke to the students.

Abbreviations of state names

When abbreviating state names, use postal-style abbreviations. Please note there are no periods in postal-style abbreviations.

Correct:     NC
             AL
             NY
Incorrect:   N.C.
             A.L.
             N.Y.

When abbreviating names and states, no space should appear between the initials.

Correct:     NC
             AT&T
             L.L. Bean
             UPS
Incorrect:   N C
             A T & T
             L. L. Bean
             U P S

In text, you may abbreviate a state name if it is preceded by the name of a city. In this case, use commas before and after the state name abbreviation. If no city is listed, do not abbreviate the state name. In The Insider or on the college’s website, include the state only if it is outside of North Carolina.

Capitalization

General

In general, capitalize the complete, official names of people, places, institutions, associations, conferences, and offices. Lowercase them when they are nonspecific, informal, or shortened.
Examples: Morehead Planetarium  planetarium
Eno River  river
President Ingram  president
Nobel Prize Laureates prize winners
Instructor Newsome instructor
Collins Building building

**County and counties**

When naming a specific county or counties, capitalize the C in *County* but lowercase the c when used in the plural *counties*.

Correct: Durham County
Durham and Orange counties
Incorrect: Durham county
Durham and Orange Counties

**Departments, offices, and divisions**

All words except for *and* in the name of a division or department are capitalized, including the word *Division* or *Department*. Use the most recent Staffing Chart (available online) as your guide.

Examples: Corporate and Continuing Education Division
Human Resources Department
Marketing and Communications Department

When giving the names of offices, only the key word(s) is (are) capitalized. The word *office* is not capitalized, nor is the word *the* preceding the name. Exception: Business Office.

Examples: Adult Education and Basic Skills office
the Center for Academic Excellence
Career Services Registration office
the Veterans Affairs office

**Durham Technical Community College’s official name**

In the first mention of the institution, use the entire name. Afterward, you may refer to the institution as *Durham Tech* or *the college*.

For EXTERNAL communications, use only *Durham Tech* as an abbreviation. It is acceptable to abbreviate the college as *DTCC* for INTERNAL communications only. No capitalization is needed.
for the second college reference unless it is part of the proper name. Do not refer to Durham Tech as a school or as Tech.

Example: Durham Technical Community College offers more than 100 credit program options. Students at the college are very satisfied with the range of program choices.

Durham Tech has helped dreams become realities for students of all ages, backgrounds, and aspirations.

Boards

Always capitalize the official names of the college’s two boards: the Board of Trustees and the Durham Technical Community College Foundation Board of Directors. In subsequent references, use Trustees and Foundation Board.

Examples: The Board of Trustees meets quarterly. The Trustees serve four-year terms. The Durham Technical Community College Foundation is guided by a Board of Directors. The Foundation Board is composed of local business and community leaders.

No other groups affiliated with the college are actually boards. (For example, our advisory committees are committees and should not be referred to as boards.)

Facilities

In the first mention, always use the official names with capital letters of campus facilities or centers. In subsequent references, either repeat the full name or use the abbreviation shown below. For publications used internally only (such as The Insider), the abbreviated references may be used. Note the abbreviations (such as NDC, ERC, or CEC) are used without periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Mention</th>
<th>Subsequent Mentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate and Continuing Education Center</td>
<td>CEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Academic Excellence</td>
<td>CAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GlaxoSmithKline Technology Center</td>
<td>Tech Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Resources Center</td>
<td>ERC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. Newton Industrial and Engineering Technologies Center</td>
<td>Newton Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Durham Center</td>
<td>NDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Campus</td>
<td>Main Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County Campus</td>
<td>OCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County Skills Development Center</td>
<td>OCSDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phail Wynn, Jr. Student Services Center</td>
<td>Wynn Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Business Center</td>
<td>SBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel B. White Building</td>
<td>White Building (not Main Building)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When using an acronym for the first time, put it in parentheses immediately after the complete, spelled-out first mention.

Example: That exhibit is housed in the Educational Resources Center (ERC). The ERC also contains our Library and Media Services.

When referring to a specific building, use the two word designation (e.g., White Building, Tech Center, Wynn Center, etc.). When referring to a specific room, list the building name and the room number. If a room has a specific name, capitalize the name of the room.

Example: That course is offered in Phillips 311 this semester.
   The Center for the Global Learner is in the White Building.
   The Multi-Purpose Room is in the Wynn Center.
   The Student Senate will meet in the Barbara Baker Activities Room.

Names, titles, and degrees

Capitalize a professional title when it precedes a person’s name. However, when it follows the name in text, do not capitalize the title. If used in a standalone bullet, capitalize the title.

Examples: President Ingram gave the commencement address.
          Dr. Bill Ingram, president of Durham Tech, gave the commencement address.
          Dr. Bill Ingram, President of Durham Tech

When referring to academic degrees in a general way, do not capitalize. When using formal names of academic degrees, do capitalize the title but not the specialty. However, doctorate is preferred over the full title when used in text.

Examples: Seventy employees hold master’s degrees.
          **Preferred: The director of the department earned a doctorate in literature.
          The director of the department earned a Doctor of Philosophy in literature.

Programs and courses

The names of programs are capitalized. When referring to a program and using the word program, do not capitalize the word program, since it is not part of the official title. See the latest Catalog and Student Handbook (available online) for the complete list of credit programs.

Examples: Clinical Trials Research Associate program
          Opticianry program
The official names of courses are capitalized and italicized; general references are not. Also, course prefixes and numbers are italicized when used.

Examples: Students in the Dental Laboratory Technology program are encouraged to take two dental courses during their first semester: *Dental Anatomy* and *Dental Materials*.
I signed up for two science courses this fall.
I will take *ELC 128* this spring.

There is a difference between the word “course” and “class.” They are not interchangeable. “Course” is the instructional offering, and “class” is the time students spend in the course of instruction.

**Semesters and seasons**

Academic semesters should not be capitalized except in the titles of documents or when used to refer to a specific semester, which must also include the year.

Examples: During fall semester, parking on campus is tight.
More students apply for enrollment during the spring than during any other time of year.
During Spring Semester 2011, 28 students enrolled in that class.
The Spring Semester Credit Schedule is available online.

**State and federal**

Lowercase the word *state* in all references. Use capital letters for *federal* only if it is part of an official, formal name. Capitalize *county* when used in the name of a specific county. *Counties* is lowercase.

Examples: In the state of North Carolina, community colleges are funded by the NC Community College System.
Students may apply for both state and federal grants.
The Federal Communications Commission makes rules concerning copyright.
Durham Tech serves residents of Durham and Orange counties.

**Times (a.m. and p.m.)**

Use lowercase letters with periods but without spaces for the abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.* For *12 a.m.* and *12 p.m.*, use *midnight* and *noon* (without the numeral 12). (Note: To meet format requirements, periods are not used in the course schedule.) When using a time range, only use
one (a.m. or p.m.) if the time span doesn’t cover both morning and afternoon. Do not use zeroes in times that start on the hour.

Examples: The session will end at noon.
He came to work at midnight.
That class meets at 1 p.m.
The seminar will run from 10-11 a.m.
The seminar will run from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
The seminar will run from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Hyphenated words in headings

When two words are hyphenated, both words are capitalized in text and column headings as well as in memo reference lines.

Correct: Part-Time and Full-Time Faculty Meeting
Incorrect: Part-time and Full-time Faculty Meeting

**Note: See Section 10 for guidelines for capitalizing bulleted items.

Hyphenation

In general, a pair or a group of words is hyphenated to indicate that the words are taken together as a unit or a single concept. The following notes will explain why there are variations in the way the same words are hyphenated.

Clusters of words

Is it part-time or part time? Either could be right — depending on how those words are used in a particular sentence.

Whenever two or more words are used together as a compound adjective and they precede a noun, the cluster of modifiers is hyphenated. Whenever the same cluster functions as some other part of speech, the cluster is NOT hyphenated.

Examples: I work part time.
It is a 20-credit-hour program.
He is a part-time student who also works full time.
He works on campus as a clerical assistant.
It is tough to find on-campus housing.
Our students are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis.
Dictionaries show accepted methods of hyphenating commonly used clusters such as *round-the-clock*, *well-known*, and *long-standing*.

**Never hyphenate an adverb before an adjective.**

Correct: It is a generally accepted fact.
Incorrect: The federally-funded program has come under scrutiny.

**Compound nouns**

Consult a reputable print or online dictionary (such as [Merriam-Webster](https://www.merriam-webster.com)) when in doubt about whether or not to hyphenate compound nouns such as *mother-in-law*.

**Numerals**

**Spelling out numbers**

Spell out numbers *one* through *nine*. Use numerals for numbers *10* and up.

Examples: I purchased nine computers for the office.
This year, more than 200 students will graduate.

Spell out any number which begins a sentence — or rewrite the sentence.

Examples: Twenty-two students will receive honors this year.
This year, 22 students will receive honors.

When listing a ranking, abbreviate and capitalize *number* and use the numeral; do not use the # sign.

Correct: Durham Tech moved from No. 7 to No. 1 on the list of Best Deals in Community Colleges.
Incorrect: Durham Tech moved from number seven to #1 on the list of Best Deals in Community Colleges.

**Days, months, and years**

Spell out numerical designations *first* through *ninth*. Use numerals with appropriate letter suffixes for *10th* and above.

Examples: During his first semester, he was on the President’s List.
Their 50th anniversary is fast approaching.
On the 61st day, disability pay begins.

Do not use -st, -th, etc. with dates.

Correct: She will attend April 27.
Incorrect: She will attend April 27th.

Also, do not use apostrophes with years EXCEPT when numerals have been omitted.

Correct: Durham Tech was founded in the 1960s.
Correct: Durham Tech was founded in the ‘60s.
Incorrect: Durham Tech was founded in the 1960’s

Money

Use the dollar sign before the numerals and omit double zeroes after the decimal.

Correct: $15
Correct: $15.25
Incorrect: $15.00

For dollar amounts beyond thousands, use the dollar sign, numerals, and appropriate word.

Correct: The grant was $14 million.
Correct: The budget was $82.6 billion.

Percentages

Express percentages in numerals rather than in words. In text, use the word percent instead of the symbol. In tables, give percentages using numerals and the % symbol.

Examples: A grade point average of 3.8 is the equivalent of 95 percent.
40% (used in a table)

The % symbol may be used in both tables and text ONLY in scientific and statistical writing.
**Telephone numbers**

If the document you are creating is strictly for use by Durham Tech’s faculty and staff, you may omit the area code and/or use the extension abbreviation for on-campus numbers. Always put a comma before the extension and after it if is not the end of the sentence.

Examples: If you are interested in participating in the professional development workshop, call ext. 8083.
For information about our RSVP program, call 919-536-7247, ext. 5301, during the week.

If the publication will be sent off campus and/or will be read by our students, include the full number with the area code and no parentheses.

Example: Marketing and Communications Department: 919-536-7246

**Plurals and Possessives**

**Names**

Form plurals of words or family names that end in *s* by adding *es*. Do NOT use an apostrophe to make a family name plural.

Correct: The Jameses live in Durham.
The Smiths live in Chapel Hill
Incorrect: The Smith’s live in Chapel Hill.

Form possessives of words or proper names that end with *s*, *x*, *es*, and *z* as follows.

Examples: Burns’ poems (singular noun ending with *s*)
Marx’s theories (singular noun ending with *x*)
Savitz’s holdings (singular noun ending with *z*)
The Jameses’ house (plural noun ending with *es*)

**Plurals**

Most plurals can be formed by adding a final *s*, including years and initials.

Examples: the early 1980s
several YMCAs
CODs and IOUs
in twos and threes
However, in rare cases, an apostrophe is needed when forming a plural in order to avoid confusion.

Examples: S’s, A’s, and I’s

Irregular plurals

alumni (not alumnuses)
appendices (preferred to appendices)
curricula (not curriculums)
data (not datums)
indexes (preferred to indices)
media (not mediums)
memoranda (not memorandums)
millennia (not millenniums)
syllabi (not syllabuses)
symposia (not symposiums)

Common errors involving possessives

Proper names and nouns form the possessive with the addition of an apostrophe and an s. However, possessive pronouns do not require the apostrophe.

Examples: The car’s tires need to be replaced. (noun)
Their anniversary is in March. (possessive pronoun)
The committee reviewed its agenda. (possessive pronoun)

It’s is the contraction of it and is and should not be confused with the possessive pronoun its (which does not use the apostrophe).

Examples: It’s time to go home. (contraction of it is)
The car lost its hubcap. (possessive pronoun)

Punctuation

Colons

Use a colon to introduce a quotation or a list provided that the clause before the colon is a complete sentence, which may include the words the following.
Correct: The class will cover the following: engine design, engine maintenance, and engine repair.
Correct: The new graphics equipment has impressive features: a color screen, a state-of-the-art printer, and a musical interface.
Incorrect: The class will cover: engine design, maintenance, and repair.

Do not use a colon after the verb to be or after the words such as or including.

Correct: On rainy days, we played board games such as Monopoly, Scrabble, and Trivial Pursuit.
Incorrect: On rainy days, we played board games such as: Monopoly, Scrabble, and Trivial Pursuit.
Correct: He bought his course supplies at the Bookstore, including the graphing calculator, pencils, and notebooks. (Note: comma precedes including.)
Incorrect: He bought his course supplies at the Bookstore including: the graphing calculator, pencils, and notebooks.

**Commas**

**Commas in a series**
Use commas between items and before the word and.

Example: Researchers study animal, vegetable, and mineral substances.

**Commas after an introductory phrase**
Use a comma after an introductory phrase unless the phrase is quite short.

Examples: Although we have applied for a federal grant, we do not expect that it will be funded.
Last year Durham Tech served more than 30,000 citizens. (no comma necessary after year but acceptable)
During 2010, Durham Tech experienced enrollment increases.

**Commas and semicolons in a series**
When using commas in a series, the commas are replaced with semicolons when one portion of the series requires commas between items.

Correct: He asked for a new desk; an office with a view; and the latest computer hardware, software, and a printer.
Incorrect: He asked for a new desk, an office with a view, and the latest computer hardware, software, and printer.
Commas with quotations
Commas ALWAYS go inside the final quotation mark.

Example: “Stop screaming,” shouted the nerve-wracked mother.

Commas in dates and in headings
Use a comma to separate a complete date from the year. Also, place a comma after the year in text.

Examples: June 16, 1991
In May 1992, several politicians visited the campus.
Application Procedures Spring 1992 (heading)
We left June 16, 1991, to travel in Europe.

Parentheses
Use parentheses to set off non-essential information. Note that the period may be placed either inside the parentheses (if the information within the parentheses is a complete, independent sentence, which began with a capital letter) or outside the parentheses (if the information within the parentheses is a fragment).

Examples: Most of Durham Tech’s students are North Carolinians. (Of course, there are exceptions.)
The majority of our students are part time (working full or part time while enrolled).

Periods
Periods are to be used at the end of each complete sentence and at the end of each bullet in a list. Periods are not used in headlines or subheadings.

Punctuation with quotation marks

Commas and periods
ALWAYS place commas and periods inside the quotation marks.

Examples: When he heard the news, the reporter mumbled, “There goes my job.”
“Don’t question authority,” said the policeman.
In Shakespeare’s words, “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”
Exclamation points and question marks
When they are a part of the quoted material or message, place exclamation points and question marks inside the quotation marks. Otherwise, they belong outside the quotation marks.

Examples: What did Martin Luther King, Jr., mean when he said, “I have a dream”? (question mark is not part of the quotation)
The instructor asked, “What is the meaning of life?” (question mark is part of the quotation)
Sergeant Parker exclaimed, “Stop smiling!” (exclamation point is part of the quotation)

Semicolons and colons
Semicolons and colons are placed outside the quotation marks or parentheses.

Example: President James remarked that the plan needed a “few minor adjustments”; however, he did not reject the plan entirely.

When a quoted statement ends with either a semicolon or colon, the colon or semicolon is dropped.

Examples: L. P. Smith said, “Don’t tell your friends their social faults; they will cure the fault and never forgive you.” (the full statement)
I agree with L.P. Smith, who simply said, “Don’t tell your friends their social faults.” (as quoted, omitting the semicolon)

Quotation marks in headlines and subheadings
Use only a single quote mark when quoted words are in a headline or subheading, not double quotation marks.

Correct: President Obama says ‘help will be given’ in response to disaster

Semicolons
Use a semicolon instead of a comma when joining two sentences with a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so) AND when one of the sentences has one or more commas in it.
The semicolon marks the break between the two sentences better than another comma would.

Use a semicolon to link two closely related sentences that show contrasts or parallels and to separate items in a series when one or more of the items require commas.

Examples: I eat chocolate pastries; she prefers fruit salad.
He went to the store to buy fruit, vegetables, and bread; clothes for his child; and a new television.
The East Coast is known for its history; the West Coast is famous for its contemporary lifestyle.

Use semicolons – instead of commas – to separate lengthy, complicated items in a series (but always if the items themselves contain commas).

Example: The recipe calls for seven cups of fresh, finely chopped herbs; two cups of homemade red wine vinaigrette; three tablespoons of virgin olive oil; and two teaspoons of Lawry’s seasoning salt.

Spacing after punctuation

Use only one space following periods, commas, semicolons, colons, exclamation points, question marks, and quotation marks.

Examples: The student walked into the classroom. He was surprised to find he was 10 minutes late. Are you coming to the picnic? If so, I’ll see you there. “Have a good weekend,” she said as she hung up the phone.

There should be no space before or after an ellipsis, nor should there be spaces between the periods in an ellipsis.

Correct: This course introduces/​covers/​includes/​provides...
Incorrect: This course introduces/​covers/​includes/​provides . . .

When using a dash, use a double dash (en dash) with a space on either side of it. (An en dash is formed by typing two hyphens and a space. Microsoft Word will automatically make the two hyphens a solid dash.)

Correct: The rededication of the White Building – the first building on campus – took place in August.
Incorrect: The rededication of the White Building—the first building on campus—took place in August.
Incorrect: The rededication of the White Building-the first building on campus-took place in August.

**Note: See Section 10 for guidelines for punctuating bulleted items.**
Preferred Spellings, Word Choices, and URL Listings

Preferred spellings at Durham Tech

Although the following words may be spelled or hyphenated in more than one way, the list below provides Durham Tech’s preferred forms, chosen to maintain consistency in materials, publications, etc.

Admissions (when referring to the college’s department)
admission (when referring to anything other than the college’s department)
advising (not advisement)
advisor (not adviser)
a lot (not alot)
alumni (not alumnuses)
appendixes (preferred to appendices)
bilingual (not bi-lingual)
cannot (not can not)
catalog (not catalogue)
child care (not childcare)
classroom (not class room)
class work (not classwork)
coeducational, coed (not co-educational)
cooperative (not co-operative but use Co-Op or co-op when abbreviating)
coordinator (not co-ordinator)
corequisite (not co-requisite)
co-sponsor (not cosponsor)
counselor (not counsellor)
course work (not coursework)
curricula (not curriculums)
data (not datums)
database (not data base)
day care (not daycare and not day-care)
daytime (not day time)
decision making (as a noun)
decision-making (as a adjective, decision-making process)
dropout (not drop out)
email (not e-mail or Email)
ensure (preferred to insure, except when the reference is insurance-related)
extracurricular (not extra-curricular)
fieldwork (not field work)
first-come, first-served (not first come, first served)
fliers (not flyers)
fundraiser
fundraising
grant writing (as a noun)
grant-writing, (as an adjective, grant-writing experience)
health care (not healthcare)
Internet
intercultural (not inter-cultural)
international (not inter-national)
lifelong (not life-long)
microcomputer (not micro-computer)
Mini-Session (not mini-session, minisession, or Minisession)
multicultural (not multi-cultural)
Multi-Purpose Room (not Multipurpose Room and not Multi-purpose room)
multipurpose (all other uses)
oncredit (not non-credit)
onprofit (not non-profit)
online (not on line and not on-line)
paraprofessional (not para-professional)
postsecondary (not post-secondary)
preregistration (not pre-registration)
prerequisite (not pre-requisite)
preschool (not pre-school)
recordkeeping (not record keeping and not record-keeping)
résumé (not resume)
statewide (not state-wide)
television (not TV)
textbooks (not text books)
timeline (not time line and not time-line)
toward (not towards)
Web (when referring to the Internet)
website (not web site)
workforce (not work force)
work-study (when referring to the federal financial aid program)

Preferred word choices

Of many choices, the following words are preferred at Durham Tech:

affect/aFFECTed (rather than impact/impacted: How many students were affected by the change?)
college (not school)
course (not class, except when referring to the group of people in a course or the actual class section meeting)
faculty member or instructor (not teacher or professor)
more than (rather than over: More than 50 people attended the lecture.)
nearly (rather than almost: Nearly 50 people attended the lecture.)
use (rather than utilized)

When referring to a company, use third-person singular, not third-person plural pronouns.
Correct: Bank of America needs to retrain its workers.
Incorrect: Bank of America needs to retrain their workers.

Preferred URL listings

When listing a URL, it is not necessary to include https:// or www Also, do not include the word website when listing a specific URL. If possible, the URL should be in bold.
Correct: For more information, visit durhamtech.edu.
Incorrect: For more information, visit our website at https://www.durhamtech.edu.

Titles of Works

The following rules of capitalization, punctuation, italics, and quotation marks apply ONLY to the use of titles of books, newspapers, magazines, musical and visual works, and other documents.

Capitalization

Always capitalize all words in a title except articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, or, yet, so), the word to in an infinitive (for example, How to) and prepositions (for example, in, of, to) unless they are the first or last word of the title or longer than five letters (without, between, through).

Examples: The Chicago Manual of Style
“That Evening Sun”
“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”
The Prince and the Pauper

Punctuation and format

Punctuation is usually kept to a minimum in titles. Therefore, when giving a title within a sentence of text, add punctuation only as needed for clarity. Insert a colon between the main title and the subtitle. If there is a dash in the original title, retain it. Set off dates with commas.

Examples: We will be analyzing the short story “Babylon Revisited” before we read the related sections in Another View: The Short Works of F. Scott Fitzgerald.
My favorite biography, Samuel Coleridge, 1772-1803, shows how the poet began his literary career and friendships.

Titles of books, magazines, journals, newspapers, plays, movies, and artwork
Preferably, italicize these titles. When that is impossible, underline them.
Examples: *The Washington Post*
   *The Last Picture Show*
   *The American Heritage Dictionary*
   *Beloved*

Titles of poems, short stories, songs, television shows, radio programs, articles, essays, chapters, and individual sections in books
Place these titles in quotation marks.

Examples: “The Cosby Show”
   “The Gift of the Magi”
   “A Prairie Home Companion”
   “The Raven”

Use of Public Records and Affirmative Action Statements

Public records statement

All email correspondence should have the following added after the signature block:

Email correspondence to and from this address may be subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and shall be disclosed to third parties when required by statutes. (NCGS Ch. 132)

Affirmative action statement

Our official affirmative action statement reads as follows:

Durham Technical Community College is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, ADA, Section 504 Institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, religion, national origin, or disability.

This statement should appear on all official publications of the college.

Because of the length of the official statement, the following shortened statement may be used:

Durham Technical Community College is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity/Section 504/ADA Institution.

Questions regarding the use of these statements should be directed to the college’s Affirmative Action officer or to Marketing and Communications Department staff.
Bullets

When a list of information needs to be presented as bullets, whether in printed materials or in PowerPoint presentations, please use the following guidelines:

- Use a colon at the end of the introductory sentence.
- Capitalize the first letter of each bullet.
- Put a period at the end of each bullet.
- Make sure all bullets are parallel.

Parallel construction means that each bullet begins with the same part of speech. For example, in the bulleted list above, each item begins with an active verb. Do not use semi-colons at end of bullets, and do not add and at the end of the penultimate bullet. If the bullets are very short (such as a list of single words), periods are not needed.