

As per Concordia's University Communications Services, the Canadian Press Style and the [Canadian Oxford Dictionary](#) should be used as the primary resources for usage and spelling.

To access the Canadian Oxford Dictionary, you should log in to your Concordia Library account. Simply click on the link above then click the "View eBook" button on the right side of the page. You will be asked to enter your Concordia Netname and password.

This Undergraduate Calendar Style Guide presents the guidelines followed for the Undergraduate Calendar, along with relevant information collected from the above sources.

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Note: See the [Undergraduate Calendar Style Guide \(Long Version\)](#) for guidelines on the following:

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Quick Reference: Frequently Used Terms

Note: For guidelines on how to write department titles and position titles at Concordia University, please see the [Undergraduate Calendar Style Guide \(Long Version\)](#): Capitalization section.

A

advisor (this spelling is used in University policy, so the Calendar follows it)

aesthetic

affect (*affect* is usually used for the verb; *effect* is usually used for the noun)

aging (not *ageing*) (the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* favours aging)

all right (two words)

alumnus (masculine), alumna (feminine), alumni (plural, gender neutral)

analog (not *analogue*)

analyze (not *analyse*), analysis, analyses

anglophone

antisemitism (all lower case, no hyphen)

B

behaviour

Birks Student Service Centre

Black (upper case for the cultural reference)

bus, buses, bused, busing

C

cancel, cancelled, cancelling, cancellation

cannot

C.Edge (Career Edge) (for C.Edge: upper case C and E; with only a period between them, but no space)

Cegep (always with capital C), (not *CEGEP*, *CÉGEP*, *cegep*, *cégep*; but *cégep* in French text)

centimetre (not *centimeter*)

centre, centred, centring (not *center*, *centered*, *centering*)

chair (may be used as a noun or a verb)

cheque

colour (not *color*)

complement (something that completes something else, or the full number of staff needed to work a unit)

complementary (completing, forming a complement)

compliment (an expression of praise)

complimentary (free of charge, or expressing praise)

co-op, co-operate, co-operative, co-operation (with hyphen)

coordinate, coordinator (no hyphen)

counsel, counselled, counselling, counsellor

cross-listed

D

decolonize, decolonization (no hyphen)

definitely (not *definatly*)

De Maisonneuve (not *de Maisonneuve*)

dependant (noun); dependent (adjective)

disc, disk (*disc* for *compact disc*, *disc jockey*, *slipped disc*; *disk* only for certain computer-related terms: *disk drive*, *floppy disk*)

discreet (tactful)

discrete (separate)

dropout (noun); drop out (verb)

E

e-business

effect (*effect* is usually used for the noun;

affect is usually used for the verb)

e.g. (short for *exempli gratia*, meaning *for example*) *The Calendar doesn't include a comma after e.g. or i.e. because it makes the text too cumbersome.

email

emeriti (gender neutral, plural); emeritus (masculine singular); emerita (feminine singular)

emphasize, emphasis

enquire, enquiry (don't use these; use *inquire*, *inquiry* instead)

enrol, enrolled, enrolling, enrolment

ensure (make sure something happens);

insure (provide insurance)

F

Faculty (for academic division); faculty (for teaching staff)

fibre (not *fiber*)

field day (two words)

field trip (two words)

fieldwork (one word)

filmmaker

First Peoples, First Peoples Studies (upper case and no apostrophe for the cultural reference and program title)

flow chart (two words)

flyer (not *flier*)

focus, focused, focusing

format, formatted, formatting

francophone

fulfill, fulfilled, fulfilling, fulfillment (as per the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*)

G

Google (upper case for noun); googled (lower case for verb)

grade point average, GPA

grey (not *gray*)

H

home page

honour, honourable, honorary

HTML

I

ID card (not *I.D.* card)

i.e. (short for *id est*, meaning *that is*)

*The Calendar doesn't include a comma after i.e. or e.g. because it makes the text too cumbersome.

Indigenous (upper case for the cultural reference)

inquire, inquiry (use instead of *enquire*, *enquiry*)

install, installed, installing, installation, instalment

interdisciplinary (no hyphen)

internet

its (possessive uses no apostrophe: *a review of Concordia and its budget*)

it's (contraction of *it is* uses an apostrophe: *it's a budget to cut spending*)

J

JPEG

judgment (not *judgement*; *judgment* is favoured by the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*)

K

kilometre (not *kilometer*)

L

label, labelled, labelling

labour (not *labor*)

layout (noun); lay out (verb)

level of courses: at the 200 level;

200-level courses

licence (noun); license (verb)

litre (not *liter*)

log (logged, logging) in (verb); log-in (noun)

M

meter (a device that measures)

metre (100 centimetres)

micro-organism (hyphen)

microprogram (no hyphen)

model, modelled, modelling

Montreal (use *Montréal* in French text only)

multidisciplinary (no hyphen)

multilingual

multimedia

multi-purpose

N

neighbour (not *neighbor*)

newswriting (no hyphen or space)

O

off campus, on campus (use hyphen when used as adjective, but not when used as adverb: *off-campus work terms*; *work off campus*)

offence, offensive

online (no hyphen)

P

PDF

per cent (two words), percentage, percentile (one word)

permanent code (instead of *code permanent*)

playwright, playwriting

practice (noun); practise (verb)

prerequisite

preschool (no hyphen)

principal (main, leading; head of school)

principle (fundamental truth or law; code of conduct)

program (not *programme*)

Q

Quebec (use *Québec* in French text only)

Quebecer

queue, queued, queuing

R

readmit

reregister

resubmit

résumé

S

secondary school (noun); secondary-school (adjective)

semester (don't use this; use *term* instead)

stationary (not moving)

stationery (writing material)

storey, storeys (level of building)

Studio Art (the discipline)

Studio Arts (the department)

subdivision

subsection

T

term (use instead of *semester*)

text message

theatre (not *theater*)

travel, travelled, travelling, traveller

U

U.K.

URL

U.S.

V

vs. (not *versus*)

W

web (short for *World Wide Web*)

web browser, web page, website (note that some web terms are written as one word and others as two words)

work term (noun); work-term (adjective)

World Wide Web

General Writing Style Guidelines – Short Version

Use full sentences

Write out text in full sentences.

Use present tense

Use the present tense whenever possible instead of the future tense.
(e.g. *This course covers the...* instead of *This course will cover the ...*).

Use third-person plural writing perspective

The Calendar is written in the third-person plural perspective (e.g. *students* must study *their* notes). Second-person perspective (*you* must study *your* notes) and first-person perspective (*I* must study *my* notes) should not be used. Text containing second- and first-person perspectives must be rewritten in the third-person perspective for the Calendar.

Use gender-neutral language

She/he: Don't use *she* or *he*. Instead, use the plural/gender-neutral form *they*.

His/her: Don't use *his* or *her*. Use plural/gender-neutral *their* instead.

Student/students: Use the plural form *students* instead of singular *student* in order to avoid the single possessives *his* or *her* and to be able to use *their* instead.

- Example of singular which should be changed to plural: *The student is required to submit his/her research paper once he/she has completed it.*
 - Better in plural: *Students are required to submit their research paper once they have completed it.*
-

Addresses, coordinates and URLs

- Concordia has two main locations, the Sir George Williams Campus and the Loyola Campus.
 - Only the campus and official building abbreviation should be included in your location.
Example: Sir George Williams Campus, GM Building; Loyola Campus, SP Building
Note: The above presentation should be used when writing out the building abbreviation in free text. However, when you enter the building abbreviation in the "Location" field in the CCMS, the field automatically converts text to all upper case.
 - Physical street addresses, room numbers, and telephone numbers should not be included. Instead, list the department URLs.
 - URLs should be in all lower-case regular font – don't capitalize the first letter of "words" in URLs (e.g. *concordia.ca*). Omit the *http://* and drop the trailing */* at the end of the web address.
Example:
Don't use this style of URL: <https://www.concordia.ca/provost/resources/curriculum.html>
Use this URL presentation instead: [concordia.ca/provost/resources/curriculum](https://www.concordia.ca/provost/resources/curriculum)
Note: To determine whether or not *www* should be included at the beginning of the address, go to the site in question and see what appears in your browser's address bar. Find out the shortest version of this URL you can enter that will still pull up the web page correctly, then use that version.
-

Dates

Avoid including specific dates, especially if they contain the year, or if they change from year to year. Instead, provide a web link that directs readers to the specific details.

Punctuation, special text characters and formatting

- **Comma:**
 - Put commas between the elements of a series but not before the final *and*, *or* or *nor* unless that avoids confusion:
men, women, children and pets
The major decided he must either attack at once, await fresh troops or withdraw.
Breakfast consisted of oatmeal, fried eggs, and bread and butter.
 - Due to the complexity of the content covered in the Undergraduate Calendar, commas are often needed before the final *and*, *or*, *nor* to make clear divisions.

- Use commas before clauses introduced by the conjunctions *and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor* or *yet* if the subject changes:
We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. — Oscar Wilde
- **Colon:** It introduces a list, but should not be used after *such as*, *for instance*, or *for example*.
- **Semicolon:**
 - A semicolon is often used in the Calendar to separate a string of topics from a different string of topics. Commas are used between the different topics within the same string, and then a semicolon separates that string from a different string of topics appearing in the same sentence:
Topics include natural processes such as fire, water, and the movement of organisms; human activities such as transportation infrastructure and urban development; and methods for analyzing landscape structure such as patches, corridor networks, and landscape metrics.
 - Semicolons are also used in course prerequisites and course notes to separate courses with different subject codes. Commas are used to separate courses with different numbers within the same subject code:
The following courses must be completed previously: CHEM 205, CHEM 206; PHYS 204, PHYS 206.
- **Double quotes:** Periods and commas, but not colons or semicolons, usually go inside the quote marks. Question and exclamation marks depend on the context.
- **Single quotes:** Double quotes should be used rather than single quotes, except for quotes within quotes. If single quotes are used, periods and commas usually go inside the quote marks.
- **Dashes:** Avoid using dashes between words and/or numerals to indicate duration, e.g. *18 – 25 years of age*; *January 1 – June 30*; *9 a.m. – 5 p.m.* Instead of a dash, write out the word *to*. This follows the Calendar writing style of using text rather than symbols in the content.
- **Ampersand (&):** Use the ampersand only if it is part of the official name, e.g. *Pratt & Whitney*. Otherwise, write out *and*.
- **Text formatting (italics, bolding, underline, all caps)**
The CCMS has very limited text formatting capability, so avoid the use of italics, bolding, underline, and text written in all capital letters.
Avoid listing text that would require italics, such as the titles of books, films, magazines, newspapers and journals.
- **Spaces:** Use **only one space** after colons and end punctuation: periods, exclamation points, question marks. Not only is the insertion of a double space not necessary, but it creates an irregular and odd-looking gap. **This is one of the most frequent typesetting errors made today.**

Abbreviations

The common sense approach to using abbreviations and acronyms is readability. Generally, the standard style is to write it out in full at first mention, followed by the acronym in parentheses. After that, use the acronym as needed.

Use of “etc.”

Don't use “etc.” You're making an assumption about what the reader knows, and it may be unwarranted. And especially don't use e.g. and etc. in the same sentence because e.g. makes etc. redundant.

Instead of: This course focuses on drug trafficking, prostitution, racketeering, smuggling, etc.
(That etc. sure is open to interpretation!)

Use: This course focuses on issues such as drug trafficking, prostitution, racketeering, and smuggling.

Instead of: This course studies positive social behaviours (i.e. helping, sharing, caring, etc.).

Use: This course studies positive social behaviours including helping, sharing, and caring.
or

This course studies positive social behaviours. Topics include helping, sharing, and caring.