

Top Writing Style Tips

These tips were developed to foster a consistent appearance in all campus communications.

SUNY Cortland name	The name is written State University of New York at Cortland or SUNY Cortland. Cortland or the university can be used in subsequent reference.
Buildings and rooms	Rooms that have a number are written: Building name, Room number. Old Main, Room 204C Miller Building, Room 408 Rooms that don't have a room number are written with the building name followed by the room name. Corey Union Function Room Alumni Arena does not include "Ice" in its name.
Office and department names	Academic units are generally called departments and administrative units are offices. Refer to the A-Z department and office list online for correct names. Write names followed by "Office" or "Department." President's Office English Department
Dates	Abbreviate month names when written with a date, except March, April, May, June and July. Avoid writing ordinal numbers such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th. Write out days of the week. Friday, May 24, 2023 Thursday, Oct. 31
Times	Write a.m. and p.m. with periods. Only include minutes to indicate a specific time after the hour. Write noon for 12 p.m. and midnight for 12 a.m. When indicating a time span in print, use a hyphen with no spaces. For web and email, write "to" instead. 6-6:30 p.m. 6 to 6:30 p.m. (note p.m. is not repeated) 9 a.m.-noon 9 a.m. to noon 11:15 a.m.-1 p.m. 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Phone numbers	Write phone numbers with hyphens after the area code and exchange. Include the entire phone number rather than just an extension: 607-753-2011.
URLs	URLs for university web addresses, and many others, are written without the www. cortland.edu/admissions facebook.com/sunycortland
Punctuation	Reserve capitalization for proper nouns. Use exclamation marks rarely. Insert only one space after periods, colons and other punctuation marks. Write simple lists without the serial comma: The event includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Symbols	Avoid using the ampersand (&). Use "at" instead of @, except in email addresses.
Underlining	In electronic communications, reserve underlining for hyperlinks.

Resources

Writing Style Guide cortland.edu/writing-style

