

House Style Guide

NOTE: The JSOU Press generally follows the editorial and style rules set forth in the *Chicago Manual of Style, 18th ed.* However, the guidance in this JSOU Press House Style Guide takes precedence. It ensures cohesive, clear, and consistent Press materials. Please refer to the direction provided in this guide first. If not listed, please consult *Chicago* or the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 11th ed.*



I. Abbreviations

- A. Common academic degrees (BA, BS, JD, MA, MBA, MS, PhD) do not need to be spelled out (expanded), except in listings or contexts where the anticipated audience may not be familiar.

Note: Do not use periods in academic degree abbreviations and offset with commas in running text when following a name (e.g., John Doe, PhD, attended Harvard). See [CMOS 10.21](#).

10: Abbreviations

10.21: Abbreviations for academic degrees

Chapter Contents / Names and Titles / Personal Names, Titles, and Degrees

Chicago recommends omitting periods in abbreviations of academic degrees (BA, DDS, etc.) unless they are required for reasons of tradition or consistency with, for example, a journal's established style. In the following list of some of the more common degrees, periods are shown only where uncertainty might arise as to their placement. Spelled-out terms, often capitalized in institutional settings (and on business cards and other promotional items), should be lowercased in normal prose. See also [8.29](#).

AB	artium baccalaureus (bachelor of arts)
AM	artium magister (master of arts)
BA	bachelor of arts
BD	bachelor of divinity
BFA	bachelor of fine arts

- B. Fig. vs Figure: “Fig.” is used only in parenthesis in running text (e.g., “(See Fig. 1)”). “Figure” is used in running text without parenthesis (e.g., “See Figure 1.”). Use title case for both.
- C. Miles, inches, and feet. Spell out.
- D. Military ranks: Spell out.
Note: Ranks should be written in sentence case, not all caps (e.g., Colonel, General, Sergeant Major, not COL, GEN, or SGM).
- E. U.S. states: Spell out.

II. Acronyms

Note: Refer to the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, November 2021, for additional guidance.

- A. Expand acronyms on first reference only, with the acronym following in parenthesis. The acronym is used on each subsequent reference.
***Note:* Do not provide an acronym for a term used only once in a document.**
- B. Do not use possessive acronyms (exception: “SOF’s”).
- C. Do not use acronyms in titles and headings (exception “SOF”).
- D. Do not end a sentence with “U.S.” Reword to avoid.
- E. United States vs. “U.S.” – Chicago now allows “U.S.” as a noun.



- F. USSOCOM (never SOCOM).
- G. U.S. SOF (never USSOF).
- H. DoD (not DOD).

Commonly known acronyms that **do not** require an expansion on first reference:

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| A. FBI | E. SEAL | I. HMO |
| B. CIA | F. ATM | J. HTML |
| C. NATO | G. DNA | K. JPEG |
| D. U.S. | H. GPS | L. NASA |

III. Capitalization

A. Capitalized

1. Services: Capitalized when referring to a specific military branch (e.g., Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force). Note: The term "Service" is capitalized when referring to a U.S. Service (e.g., Service member, Service; the U.S. Military Services)
2. Special Forces: Always capitalized for U.S. forces (not special forces); lowercase for foreign special forces.
3. Special Operations Forces: Always capitalized for U.S. forces.
4. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Guardians.
5. Joint Force (capped); Joint (alone)
6. Names of specific ships and other vessels are capitalized and italicized (e.g., USS *Cole*, space shuttle *Discovery*). Note: "USS," "HMS," etc. are not italicized, and the word "ship" is not italicized. If a ship is numbered, include on first mention in parenthesis (e.g., "USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65)"). See [CMOS 8.116](#).
7. Military exercises and operation names: Capitalize "Operation" and put exercise name in all caps (e.g., Operation ENDURING FREEDOM).
8. act/doctrine/treaty.: Capitalize the specific name when used in full; use lower case when used generically: the Mann Act, the act; the Treaty of Versailles, the treaty.
9. Departments of government: Capitalize the department name. Capitalize "department" when included as part of the name; lower case when it is used generically (Department of the Treasury; Treasury department)
10. Left and Right (political): Capitalize "the Left" and "the Right," but:
 - i. members of the left wing, right wing; left-winger(s), right-winger(s); on the left, on the right
 - ii. the Far Left, the Far Right
11. Leadership Forum
12. Media Roundtable
13. Nation – lowercase national unless National Guard
14. Moore's law
15. Projects and programs: Project and program titles are capitalized and not italicized. Only capitalize "project" or "program" if part of the official name (Stuart Family Congressional Fellowship Program, Governance in a Time of Technological Change project, JSOU project on China's Global Sharp Power).
16. **Per CMOS 18 2024 updates, in titles, prepositions of five or more letters are now capitalized.**

B. Not capitalized

1. Administration: Lower case (the Biden administration).
2. bachelor's degree; bachelor of science

10: Abbreviations

10.21: Abbreviations for academic degrees

Chapter Contents / Names and Titles / Personal Names, Titles, and Degrees

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AB	artium baccalaureus (bachelor of arts)
AM	artium magister (master of arts)
BA	bachelor of arts
BD	bachelor of divinity
BFA	bachelor of fine arts
BM	bachelor of music
BS	bachelor of science

3. Branch: Lowercase for governmental divisions: the executive branch, the judicial branch.
4. White: Do not capitalize when referring to ethnicity. **But:** Black.
5. Do not capitalize titles when they come *after* the person's name (e.g., General Fenton; Fenton, the commanding general at USSOCOM). See [CMOS 8.28](#) and [CMOS 8.30](#).

8.28: Academic titles

Chapter Contents / Titles and Offices

Academic titles generally follow the pattern for civil titles (see 8.22).

the professor; Françoise Meltzer, professor of comparative literature; Professor Meltzer

the chair; Mark Payne, chair of the Department of Classics; Professor Payne (but see 8.30)

the provost; Eric D. Isaacs, provost of the University of Chicago; Isaacs

the president; Robert J. Zimmer, president of the University of Chicago; Zimmer

8: Names, Terms, and Titles of Works

8.21: Titles used in apposition

Chapter Contents / Titles and Offices

When a title is used in apposition before a personal name—that is, not alone and as part of the name but as an equivalent to it, usually preceded by *the* or by a modifier—it is considered not a title but rather a descriptive phrase and is therefore lowercased.

the empress Elisabeth of Austria (*but* Empress Elisabeth of Austria)

German chancellor Angela Merkel (*but* Chancellor Merkel)

the Argentinian-born pope Francis

former president Carter

former presidents Reagan and Ford

the then secretary of state Hillary Clinton



8: Names, Terms, and Titles of Works

8.30: Descriptive titles

Chapter Contents / Titles and Offices

When preceding a name, generic titles that describe a person's role or occupation—such as *philosopher* or *historian*—should be lowercased and treated as if in apposition (see 8.21). Compare 8.28.

the historian William McNeill (*not* Historian McNeill)



8: Names, Terms, and Titles of Works**8.159: Principles of headline-style capitalization**

Chapter Contents / Titles of Works / Capitalization, Punctuation, and Italics

The conventions of headline style are governed mainly by emphasis and grammar. The following rules, though occasionally arbitrary, are intended primarily to facilitate the consistent styling of titles mentioned or cited in text and notes:

1. Capitalize the first and last words in titles and subtitles (but see rule 7), and capitalize all other major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some conjunctions—but see rule 4).
2. Lowercase the articles *the*, *a*, and *an*.
3. Lowercase prepositions, regardless of length, except when they are used adverbially or adjectivally (*up* in *Look Up*, *down* in *Turn Down*, *on* in *The On Button*, *to* in *Come To*, etc.) or when they compose part of a Latin expression used adjectivally or adverbially (*De Facto*, *In Vitro*, etc.).
4. Lowercase the common coordinating conjunctions *and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, and *nor*.
5. Lowercase *to* not only as a preposition (rule 3) but also as part of an infinitive (*to Run*, *to Hide*, etc.), and lowercase *as* in any grammatical function.
6. Lowercase the part of a proper name that would be lowercased in text, such as *de* or *von*.
7. Lowercase the second part of a species name, such as *fulvescens* in *Acipenser fulvescens*, even if it is the last word in a title or subtitle.

IV. Captions, Tables, & Figures

- A. Captions: Write in present tense, flush left, placed below the figure, and sentence case. Include the source. See example below:

Figure 3. A diagram showing the enduring utility of SOF in compound strategic competition. Source: Dr. Isaiah Wilson III

- B. Tables and figures: A figure caption can be a fragment or a title. “Figure” is used in captions with a period following (e.g., “Figure 3.1.”). Tables should have complete and descriptive titles above the table, in title case. Include source information under the table, flush left. Avoid using acronyms in captions.

Note: Photos are not figures and do not to be labeled as such.

- C. Refer to the figure or table in the text immediately preceding it (e.g., “See Figure 1.”). If in parentheses, abbreviate [e.g., “(see Fig. 1)”. Do NOT include a location (e.g., “See Figure 1 below,” since layout may change placement).
- D. Ensure that direction/callouts are included in the manuscript to direct the typesetter where to place the figure or table. Use brackets (e.g., [Insert Fig. 1 here]).
- E. Provide any images, tables, and figures as separate files; provide source material/permissions as necessary.
- F. Photo credit should be listed without an ending period.

3: Illustrations and Tables

3.21: Format and wording for captions

Chapter Contents / Illustrations / Captions

A caption—the explanatory material that appears outside (usually below) an illustration—is distinct from a key and from a label, which appear within an illustration (see 3.7; see also 3.44). A caption may consist of a word or two, an incomplete or a complete sentence, several sentences, or a combination. No punctuation is needed after a caption consisting solely of an incomplete sentence. If one or more full sentences follow it, each (including the opening phrase) has closing punctuation. In a work in which most captions consist of full sentences, incomplete ones may be followed by a period for consistency. Captions should be capitalized in sentence style (see 8.158), but formal titles of works included in captions should be capitalized in headline style (see 3.22).

Wartime visit to Australia, winter 1940

The White Garden, reduced to its bare bones in early spring. The box hedges, which are still cut by hand, have to be carefully kept in scale with the small and complex garden as well as in keeping with the plants inside the “boxes.”



V. Citations

Note: Refer to Chicago for additional guidance.

- A. Endnotes – JSOU Press, in accordance with Chicago, uses endnotes. see [CMOS 14.24](#)). Footnotes are also acceptable.

1. Endnote reference numbers should be superscript and after the period or other punctuation with no space. Ensure the number corresponds to the correct note. *Note: Use a space between end punctuation and the parentheses enclosing an endnote for best readability in Sway documents.*
2. For Edited Volumes, compile endnotes by chapter and number sequentially by chapter; for other publications, compile at the end of the document.
3. Include a direct object identifier (DOI, if available) or URL link, if available.

- B. Other

1. Do not use “Ibid.” Use shortened citations.
2. Per CMOS 18 2024 updates, when citing books, city of publication is no longer required.

VI. Foreign Languages

- A. Arabic/ Persian

1. al-Qaeda (Only capitalize the first “a” when it begins a sentence)
2. Daesh (not Dae’sh)
3. Hezbollah (not Hizbollah)
4. Osama bin Laden (not Usama)

5. Qur'an (not Koran)
6. Ayatollah Khamenei
7. Qassim Soleimani

B. Chinese

1. Chinese politicians and VIPs: Surname is listed first. Use for subsequent references.

a. Chiang Kai-shek	f. Mao Zedong / Chairman Mao
b. Deng Xiaoping	g. Wen Jiabao
c. Hu Jintao	h. Xi Jinping
d. Jiang Zemin	i. Yang Jiechi
e. Li Kexin	j. Zhou Wenzhong

2. Uyghur(s): Chinese ethnic minority group
3. Xinjiang: Territory in NW China.

C. French

1. Use diacritics (accents) with capital as well as lower-case letters: *Étienne Manac'h*
2. Follow native language's capitalization rules. If title begins with an article, italicize the article but not the word following (e.g., "*L'origine du monde*, *La diplomatie n'est pas un dîner de gala.*")

D. Other

1. Kim Jong-un
2. Kuomintang
3. Kyiv: Preferred over "Kiev," but both are correct
4. Molotov, Vyacheslav

VII. Lists

- A. Use a list for three or more points. Punctuate if using complete sentences.

VIII. Miscellaneous

- A. Passive voice: Use in moderation.
- B. Pull quotes: Can be suggested/noted by authors, but ultimate decision rests with Press during layout. Must be a complete sentence (without ellipsis) and be short and concise. Don't use a sentence with a citation.
- C. Spacing: Use one space after periods and colons. When indenting or tabulating material, set up proper, consistent tabs rather than using spaces.
- D. Use "curly" apostrophes (') instead of straight marks (').
- E. Italics
 - a. Use for foreign languages unless included in Merriam-Webster. If a word is repeated, italicize on first occurrence only.
 - b. Do not italicize or capitalize "the" in titles of papers or magazines when more than one word follows: the *Washington Post*; the *New Yorker*; **but** *The Economist*.

- c. Do not use italics for JSOU research projects, events, or web platforms that contain multiple series.

IX. Naming

A. Pronouns

- 1. Do not use “he, she, him, or her” *unless gender is identified*. Use “they, them, their” if no gender is identified. (e.g., “The soldier called their mother.” Not “The soldier called his/her mother.”).
- 2. Do not personify countries (“it,” not “her”).
- 3. Do not use first-person (“we” or “I”) or second-person (“you”) pronouns.

B. Other

- 1. SOF is plural. (SOF are/they are)
- 2. conventional forces (not general purpose forces)
- 3. brand names: Avoid when possible, e.g., “videoconferencing” in place of Zoom and “digital graphics presentation” in place of PowerPoint.
- 4. COVID-19: Use all capitals and include “-19’ on first reference. OK to use “COVID” alone on subsequent uses. COVID-19 refers to the disease, not the virus.
- 5. JSOU fellows
 - a. For identities of individual fellows, only capitalize fellow title when used before name.
 - b. When listing, alphabetize.
- 6. Middle East: Use in place of Near East. OK especially in a cultural or political context. In a geographical context, West Asia may be preferred.
- 7. Near East: Middle East preferred unless used in a historical sense.
- 8. West Asia: See entry under Middle East.

X. Numbers

- A. 9/11: when referring to the attacks on 11 September 2001
- B. 4th (not 4th /aka no superscript)
- C. Spell out one through nine and use digits for 10 and above (always spell out when used as first word in a sentence). Always use digits for:
 - 1. Sentences with lists of three or more numbers (17 fatalities: 11 Americans, 4 Canadians, and 2 Columbians)
 - 2. Charts
 - 3. Military units
 - 4. Pages and chapters
 - 5. When preceding percent (3 percent interest)
 - 6. Ages (e.g., “He was 4 years old.”)
- D. Percent: Spell out (no %).
- E. Military Units

1. Army and Marine units: Use figures to designate all Army units except corps and numbered armies. Use Roman numerals for corps and spell out numbered armies.
 - a. 2d Army Group.
 - b. III Corps.
 - c. 7th AA Brigade.
 - d. First Army.
 - e. 2d Infantry Division.
 - f. 92d Infantry Regiment.
2. Navy units: Use figures to designate all navy units except fleet.
 - a. Seventh Fleet Carrier Group 8.
 - b. VF31.
3. Air Force units: Use figures to designate units up to and including wings. Use figures for numbered air forces only if using the abbreviation AF. When abbreviating the organization name (FW, AMW, AF, etc.), do not use st, d, or th with the number.
 - a. 6th Air Mobility Wing; 6 AMW.
 - b. Ninth Air Force; 9 AF.

XI. Punctuation

- A. Commas: The serial/Oxford comma—a comma added after the last word in a series—is always used (e.g., Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, and Space Force).
- B. Dashes & Hyphens
 1. Em dash (—): Can be used for clauses. No spaces are on either side of the em dash.
 2. En dash (–): Used for ranges (e.g., pages, months, ages). No spaces are on either side of the en dash.
- C. Other
 1. Ellipsis: Only used as part of a quotation. No spaces are on either side of the ellipses (e.g., lorem...ipsum). **Do not end or begin a sentence with an ellipsis. Pull quotes should not contain an ellipsis.**
 2. Quotation marks: Avoid the use of “scare quotes” for emphasis unless the term emphasized is used in a nonstandard, ironic, or other special sense. Do not overuse.
 - a. Use for slang or idiomatic phrases (e.g., “Gordian Knot,” except those that are widely used and appear in standard English dictionaries).
 3. Ampersands: Avoid, except in display text
 4. Suffixes such as Jr., Sr., II, and III are not set off by commas after an individual’s name, except upon request of the individual names. Professional and academic degrees and titles such as “MD,” “PhD,” and “Esq.” are set off by commas, both before and after the title.
 5. Washington, D.C. (with periods)
 6. No periods used in academic degrees and titles (e.g., PhD, EdD)

XII. Spelling

- A. Advisor (not adviser)
- B. and/or: Avoid when possible
- C. expletives: JSOU does not publish expletives. When used in quoted text or citations, expletives may be replaced with the word's initial and final letters, with two em-dashes between.
- D. White paper but whiteboard
- E. email (no hyphen)
- F. health care (two words)
- G. gray or grey is ok but be consistent
- H. decision-making
- I. post-traumatic

XIII. Titles & Ranks

		Covers	Forewords	Bios	Running Text
Mr./Mrs.		John Smith	Mr. John Smith/ Mr. Smith	Mr. John Smith/ Mr. Smith	John Smith/ Smith
Dr.		Dr. John Smith	Dr. John Smith/ Dr. Smith	Dr. John Smith/ Dr. Smith	Dr. John Smith/ Dr. Smith
Active Duty		Major John Smith	Major John Smith/ Major Smith	Major John Smith/ Major Smith	Major John Smith/ Major Smith
Retired Military	<O-5	John Smith	Mr. John Smith/ Mr. Smith	Mr. John Smith/ Mr. Smith	John Smith/ Smith
	O-6+	Colonel John Smith	John Smith, Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret./ Colonel Smith	John Smith, Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret./ Colonel Smith	John Smith, Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret./ Colonel Smith

CMOS 18 updates

1. "Headline style" will now be called "title case."
2. Prepositions in headlines of 5 letters or more are capped (e.g., through, above) vs. all prepositions being lowercase, no matter the length.
3. If a periodical title includes an initial "The" (as indicated in its masthead or on its cover), authors will retain "The" in running text. (For example, "The New York Times" but "the American Journal of Sociology").

4. Proper nouns: A proper noun used in a nonliteral sense will be capitalized according to the first entry at Merriam-Webster.com
<https://dragonflyeditorial.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5fd8917066620b1994087f353&id=ff8a260616&e=7d90e07e1e>> . The examples CMOS editors give are “french fry
<https://dragonflyeditorial.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5fd8917066620b1994087f353&id=90903c0f81&e=7d90e07e1e>> ” (no change) and “French dressing
<https://dragonflyeditorial.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5fd8917066620b1994087f353&id=3934e22a72&e=7d90e07e1e>> ” (a switch to a capital ‘F.’)
5. Capitalization after a colon: If a colon is followed by a complete sentence, the first letter of the first word will be capitalized. If the colon is followed by a fragment, the first letter of the first word will be lowercase. Note: Chicago’s colon rule will now match AP’s colon rule.
6. E-terms: While some e-terms (e-commerce, e-waste) will continue to use hyphens, “ebook” and “esports” will join “email” on the hyphenless side.
7. Compound modifiers: Under current rules, a compound modifier uses a hyphen before a noun and no hyphen after a noun. Under the new rules, CMOS will add some exceptions. For example, “first-rate” will now be hyphenated no matter where it falls in a sentence, and “guest room” will not, even if it comes before a noun.
8. En dash: When using the names of two or more people as a compound modifier in terms such as “Epstein–Barr virus,” authors will use an en dash rather than a hyphen.