



# PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

## **EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE**



# Providence College Editorial Style

## Students and alumni



The Providence College Editorial Style Guide was compiled for those who write and edit college communications, marketing collateral, content and publications, both online and print, centrally and in the academic and administrative units.

The guide includes PC-specific references and usage. For questions, email the Division of Marketing and Communications, [marcom@providence.edu](mailto:marcom@providence.edu).

**Use class years after the names of students and alumni. The apostrophe before the class year is curved like a comma:**

### **Firstname Lastname '75**

In Microsoft Word and Outlook, type the apostrophe and class year, then the space bar. The apostrophe will autocorrect to the proper look.

A middle initial can be used for various reasons, including: 1) to denote formality; 2) the subject's personal preference; 3) to differentiate between two people with the same first name and last name.

### **Students:**

Firstname Lastname '25  
Firstname X. Lastname '25G

### **Alumni:**

Firstname Lastname '75

### **Alumni with two degrees:**

Firstname Lastname '22, '25G

### **Alumni from School of Continuing Education:**

Firstname Lastname '19SCE

### **Honorary degrees:**

Firstname Lastname '62, '17Hon.  
Firstname Lastname '19Hon.

### **When requested, we use parent years:**

Firstname Lastname '25P

### **And, when requested, grandparent years:**

Firstname Lastname '25GP

### **Separate multiple degrees by a comma, not an ampersand:**

Firstname Lastname '73G, '83Ph.D., '87G  
Firstname Lastname '63, '90Hon., '89P



## Faculty members

### **Full-time, tenure-track professors:**

Professor  
Associate professor  
Assistant professor

### **Full or part-time, non-tenure track professors:**

Visiting faculty  
Renewable contingent faculty (professor of practice, clinical professor, instructional professor)  
Special faculty (scholar-in-residence, research associate, adjunct)

### **After the professor's name, list the highest degree attained:**

Examples: Ph.D. for doctor of philosophy; Ed.D. for doctor of education; J.D. for doctor of law; MBA for master of business administration, MFA for master of fine arts, DNP for doctor of nursing practice.

Firstname Lastname, Ph.D., professor of history

Avoid using "Dr." before the professor's name, since not all of our professors have doctorates.

Do not use "Dr." and "Ph.D." at the same time.

### **Do not use periods if there are three or more capital letters, such as MFA, MBA, DNP:**

Firstname Lastname, MFA, associate professor of art  
Firstname Lastname, MBA, assistant professor of management  
Firstname Lastname, DNP, professor of nursing

### **Add a class year when the professor is an alumnus:**

Firstname Lastname, MFA '07, associate professor of English  
Firstname Lastname, J.D. '94, assistant professor of practice in management

# Dominicans



Dominicans are members of the Order of Preachers, founded by St. Dominic in 1216.

Dominicans use O.P. after their names:

**Rev. Firstname Lastname, O.P.**  
**Sister Firstname Lastname, O.P.**

Rev. is the appropriate formal title for a Dominican priest. It should be used in most cases when his name appears in written form, especially on first reference. Use class years for Dominicans who are alumni.

**Rev. Firstname Lastname, O.P. '98**  
**Rev. Firstname Lastname, O.P.**

Father Sicard's full, formal title:

**College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P.**  
**'78, '82G**

The prefix "Rev." should be used for communication purposes such as these:

- Identifying a Dominican priest who is being noted as part of an event invitation, registration, roster, or program.
- Providing a signature for a formal communication such as a letter, citation, or proclamation.
- On signage where a Dominican priest is being recognized or quoted.
- On photo captions for print or digital usage.
- As first reference in text/editorial copy, for example, news stories and promotional or marketing communications.

**Use “Father” on second reference in most communications.**

“Rev. Robert J. Slavin, O.P. ’28 was Providence College’s sixth president. Father Slavin served in that role from 1947 until his death on April 24, 1961.”

**“Fr.” is acceptable in informal communications:**

- Letter or email signatures, internal communications
- Certain event posters or other forms of invitation for internal audiences, including student audiences

**Adding a Ph.D. or other terminal degree is appropriate for academic events, such as a convocation or a commencement program. It comes after O.P. in the Dominican’s name:**

College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P., Ph.D. ’78, ’82G.

Dominicans also earn these degrees:

- STL: Licentiate in sacred theology, equivalent of a master’s degree
- STD: Doctorate in sacred theology, equivalent of a doctoral degree.

The highest degree obtained by the Dominican can be added after O.P. in academic communications, such as a convocation or commencement program.

Dominican priests are sometimes called friars, but only our athletes are Friars.

Dominicans wear habits, not cowls or robes.

Mass is always capitalized in a sentence. Masses have a principal celebrant, the priest. Masses are sometimes “concelebrated” – celebrated by more than one priest.



## Time, date, place

### **First the day, then the date, then the time:**

Commencement will take place on Sunday, May 20, 2024, at 11 a.m.

### **Don't add :00 after the hour:**

- 8 a.m., not 8:00 a.m.

### **Don't add "th" or "nd" after the day:**

- May 2, not May 2nd

### **Use midnight and noon, not than 12 a.m. and 12 p.m.**

### **Lower case a.m. and p.m.**

### **Time range:**

"From 8 to 10 a.m." or "From 8-10 a.m."

"From 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m."

"From 7 p.m. to midnight."

### **Months**

Only abbreviate months when space is limited. April, May, June, and July are never abbreviated.

### **States**

Only abbreviate names of states when space is limited. When abbreviating for space, do not use the postal abbreviation. Use R.I. for Rhode Island, Conn. for Connecticut, Mass. for Massachusetts. (RI, MA, CT are appropriate for a mailing address.)

### **Numbers**

Numbers from one to nine are spelled out. Exceptions: Use numerals for ages, dollar amounts, percentages (with the % sign).



## General rules

### **Providence College uses gender neutral and inclusive language:**

First-year student, not freshman.

Use sophomores, juniors, and seniors rather than “upper class students.”

Use alumnus for one graduate.  
Two or more graduates are alumni.

Avoid using alumna (singular) or alumnae (plural) unless to emphasize an event specifically for women.

Use “people with disabilities” rather than “disabled people” or “handicapped people.”

Use “chair” instead of chairman or chairperson.

### **Use the serial or Oxford comma in a list of three or more:**

PC defeated Villanova, UConn, and Marquette.

### **Italicize book titles. Use quotation marks for plays and other publications.**

### **Capitalize course titles. No quotation marks.**

### **Lower case majors and minors, except English, other languages, Black studies.**

### **One space (not two) after a period.**

### **No comma before Jr. or III**

### **Use spaces around the em dash — or long dash — when setting phrases apart.**

### **Ellipses: Type three periods and include a space before the first period and after the last period to indicate missing material. No spaces between the periods.**

**Avoid acronyms that are not easily understood.**

On first reference, use the full name of schools, departments, organizations, and companies without parenthesis. After that, use the acronym, but only if it is clear to the reader.

Not: Providence College (PC)

Not: Providence College School of Business (PCSB)

On subsequent reference, it might be more clear to the reader to say “the college” rather than “PC” or “the business school” rather than “the PCSB.”

**Avoid random acts of capitalization.**

Capitalize job titles only when used before a name:  
School of Business Dean Firstname Lastname, Ph.D.  
Firstname Lastname, Ph.D., dean of the School of Business.

Common nouns (including “college” and “church”) should be lower case.

Reserve capitalization for proper nouns:

“The School of Arts and Sciences” is capitalized; “the school” is not.

“PC200: The Providence College Strategic Plan” is capitalized; “the strategic plan” is not

“The Board of Trustees” is capitalized; “the board” is not.

Capitalize the formal names of offices, such as Office of Academic Affairs.

Do not capitalize “fall semester” or “spring semester.”

Capitalize class as part of a proper name: “Class of 2024”

Friar family, not “Friar Family.”

Veritas, the college motto meaning truth, is capitalized and may be italicized.



### **Shorter is always better.**

Write using as few words and be as direct in meaning as possible:

- “Will meet,” not “will be meeting”
- “Will study,” not “will be studying”
- “Will be,” not “going to be”

### **Use the active voice.**

Sometimes this is as easy as eliminating the words “have” or “has” in a sentence.

Example:

“The survey has been a valuable opportunity to hear from faculty and staff” can become “The survey was a valuable opportunity to hear from faculty and staff.”

### **Avoid dangling participles.**

Example: “Modeled after the popular TED talks, you can hear alumni and faculty experts speak.”

This sentence means that you were modeled after the popular TED talks.

Rewrite it: “Modeled after the popular TED talks, the program will feature alumni and faculty experts.”

### **Remember the second comma.**

Not: “Providence College, located in Providence, Rhode Island is a great place.”

Instead: Providence College, located in Providence, Rhode Island, is a great place.

The second comma is often easily forgotten when mentioning dates:

Not: “Commencement will be on Sunday, May 20, 2024 at the AMP.”

Instead: Commencement will be on Sunday, May 20, 2024, at the AMP.



## Worthy of note

- **Annual event**

An event cannot be annual until it has occurred at least once. Do not use “first annual.”

- **Office of Admission**

Providence College has an Office of Admission, not “Admissions.” It has a dean of admission and financial aid, not a dean of admissions and financial aid.

- **Office of Athletics**

Providence College has an Office of Athletics. Do not use “athletic director” or “athletic department.” Use “director of athletics” or “athletics director.”

- **St. Dominic Chapel**

Not St. Dominic’s Chapel.

- **Advance registration, not advanced registration.**

- **First-come, first-served, not first-come first-serve.**

- **Appetizers, not hors d’oeuvres.**

- **“Please respond by,” not “Please RSVP”**

(RSVP means “Respond if you please.”)

- **“Died,” not “passed.”**

- **Use “and” rather than the ampersand.**

- **“Said” is a better verb than “shared” and sufficient in all writing.**

- **Exclamation points do not make words exciting. To convey excitement, choose better words.**



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