



**GORDON**  
**COLLEGE**

## EDITORIAL

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# Style Guide



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**The Gordon College editorial style guide supports consistency, clarity, and readability in the College’s written communications.** We appreciate adherence to this guide for all public-facing writing, including pages on the College’s website, email campaigns, flyers, invitations, and any similar print or digital communications.

With only a few exceptions, Gordon College follows *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMoS), which the College provides to students, faculty, and staff electronically. Those exceptions and helpful key points are included in this guide. In general, this guide does not include matters that can be resolved by consulting the CMoS. Our guide is not meant to govern academic or technical writing for specific fields with their own conventions.

**As improvements or additions are needed, please email [marketing@gordon.edu](mailto:marketing@gordon.edu).**

## Brief Guidelines for General Writing Style

Always favor concision and readability over exhaustive detail. If information or ideas can be expressed in fewer words, they should be. Avoid jargon and technical language. Consider being accessible to an audience of potential students, most likely still in high school, and their families.

In general, follow the principles of thesis-driven writing. Start with an overarching or main point and then move to supporting details. For instance, if announcing an event, begin with the name, date, time, and location of the event, and then move on to details like individual speakers or a following reception.

Whenever possible, replace forms of the verb “to be” with action verbs. For example, instead of “They are students at Gordon College,” write, “They study at Gordon College.”

“To be” sometimes serves as a helper in what is known as the “progressive” or “continuous” tense. If a writer intends to express an ongoing action, then use the progressive tense by retaining “to be.” Otherwise, consider omitting “to be.” For example: “She is working at the café” can be shortened to “She works at the café,” but “She is working at the café while earning her graduate degree,” should remain as is.

Avoiding forms of the verb “to be” can also help to maintain active voice. In active voice, the grammatical subject of the sentence performs the action expressed by the verb, rather than receiving it. For example: “The student was taught an important lesson by the professor,” should be rewritten as “The professor taught the student an important lesson.”

## Gordon College Style Guide Cheat Sheet

### The College and Contact Information

On first reference, use “Gordon College.” Subsequently, “Gordon” and “the College” are both acceptable.

### Gordon College’s Address:

Aside from the zip code, each element of the College’s address should be separated by either a line break or comma:

Gordon College  
255 Grapevine Road  
Wenham, MA 01984

Gordon College, 255 Grapevine Road, Wenham, MA 01984

*Only* use the ZIP+4 for items that will be physically handled by USPS: 01984-1899

**Phone and Email:**

All phone numbers should be punctuated with periods: **978.867.4000**

Always use ten-digit numbers *without* an initial “1” for the country code.

Names in email addresses can be capitalized: **Jane.Doe@gordon.edu**

The subject line of formal emails should use “title case,” explained further under “Titles” within this guide.

**Date and Time of Day:**

Dates should be written in month-day-year order with the month spelled out and a comma separating day and year: **October 19, 2025** (note the cardinal, not ordinal number: 19 not 19th).

When many dates appear together, as in a list of calendar events, the day-month-year or day-month form with no punctuation may be used:

**7 April** Spring Recess Begins

**15 April** Spring Recess Ends

**16 April** Quad 4 Begins

Gordon College expresses time using numerals and lowercase, punctuated abbreviations. Times on the hour should usually not specify minutes unless deemed aesthetically necessary, as in a timetable or other listing:

**Reception begins at 5:30 p.m.**

**Residence halls open at 8 a.m.**

Times of day in even, half, and quarter hours and times with o'clock, can be spelled out:

**Her day begins at five o'clock in the morning.**

**The meeting continued until half past three.**

Ranges of dates and times should be separated by the word “to” or an en dash with no spaces:

**October 19 to October 26**    OR    **October 19–October 26**

**11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**    OR    **11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.**

**5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**    OR    **5:30–7:30 p.m.**

*Do not abbreviate dates* to avoid confusion of day-month and month-day orders.

Note that a.m. and p.m. are only used once if a time range does not cross noon or midnight.

## Titles:

**Capitalize** most titles according to what Chicago calls “title case.” Capitalize all words in titles except for short prepositions (to, for, in, on), articles (a, an, the), and common conjunctions (and, but, nor, or). Note that all verbs, including “is,” should always be capitalized. For exceptions and full rules see *CMoS* (8.160).

**Italicize** the titles of major works like books, plays, films, television or podcast series, newspapers, magazines, journals, and works of art and music. (Important exceptions: the Bible and individual books of the Bible.)

Examples: *War and Peace*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Golden Girls*, *Stuff You Should Know*, *The New York Times*, *People*, Michelangelo’s *David*.

Place **quotation marks** around the titles of shorter works like essays, poems, short stories, lectures, and individual episodes of podcasts, TV shows, or other broadcasts.

Examples: “The Purloined Letter,” “The Road Not Taken,” the famous “I Have a Dream” speech.

Use **regular type**, for the names of event series, blogs, websites, recurring columns.

Examples: the Alton C. Bynum Recital Series, Etsy, Facebook, Google Books, Dear Abby, A Gordon Stillpoint.

## People:

### Alumni:

In captions, titles, or other brief mentions, give an alum’s name with last two digits of their year of graduation:

John Doe ’14

(Note that the tail of the apostrophe points left and no distinction is made for B.A. or B.S.)

For alumni with undergraduate *and* graduate degrees from Gordon, give year of bachelor’s degree then graduate degree abbreviation and year awarded, separated by a comma:

Jane Doe, ’16, M.A.’20, Ph.D.’28

*For multiple degrees in running text*, the years and degrees can be set off by commas:

The College was pleased to honor Jane Doe, ’16, M.A.’20, Ph.D.’28, with this new award.

For alumni with graduate degrees earned elsewhere that should be acknowledged—an alum who earned a Ph.D. and returned to Gordon to teach, for instance—name as above with additional degree(s), but do not give year or institution. So, if Jane Doe, above, earned a Ph.D. at Boston University, the sentence would read:

The College was pleased to honor Jane Doe, ’16, M.A.’20, Ph.D., with this new award.

### Faculty and Administrators:

Every instructor of a college course may be referred to as the “professor,” but only those who hold the official rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or full Professor should have the capitalized title as part of their proper name:

**The students asked their professor, Frank Nerks, if they could have an extension.**

**Next week, Professor Nerks will address the United Nations.**

(Note that a doctorate is not necessarily required to instruct a college course nor to hold the role of professor, so be sure not to give the title “Dr.” to someone who does not hold that degree.)

Always identify an administrator or faculty member’s job title at first mention. But only capitalize such roles when used before (and therefore as part of) a person’s name:

**President Michael D. Hammond will speak in chapel tomorrow, and the students look forward to the president’s talk.**

**To prepare for his lecture, President Hammond consulted with Stephen Alter, professor of history. The president said he was glad to get some perspective from Professor Alter and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.**

*Note:* While the names of specific academic and administrative departments are usually capitalized, they are *not* capitalized when part of an academic or administrative role:

**Thomas Hurley, vice president of marketing and enrollment, met with the deans last week. Dean Kwok said that Vice President Hurley really helped them understand upcoming plans for Marketing and Enrollment.**

In an exception to the above rules, administrative and faculty roles should be capitalized according to “title case” when appearing as signatures, on business cards, as the title or subtitle of a biography, on diplomas, etc.

Finally, if an individual wishes to “force” capitalization on their role in running text, they may do so by making it a specific proper noun:

**Hi, my name is Minji Kim, the Assistant Professor of Music and Choir Director at Gordon College.**

In this case, both the definite article and specifying the role at Gordon College can make the title a proper noun.

## Quick Pointers:

The possessive of most singular nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an s. The possessive of plural nouns (except for irregular plurals, like children, that do not end in s) is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

### Singular common nouns:

the horse's mouth  
the cat's meow  
the virus's toll

### Singular proper nouns:

Jane's house  
Chicago's lakefront  
Kansas's legislature

### Plural common nouns:

puppies' paws  
my parents' house  
children's literature

### Plural proper nouns:

the Lincolns' marriage  
the Joneses' new house  
dinner at the Browns'

*Note:* Gordon style makes an exception for Jesus' and Moses' as written in *all* versions of the Bible. Also, some words—like the United States and politics—are plural in form but refer to a singular entity. These should follow the rule for plural nouns (or be written with “of”): the United States' borders, the finer points of politics.

**Use the serial comma.** In a list of three or more items, place a comma before the concluding conjunction:

**We went to Commencement with Abby, Betty, and Candace.**

**Choices for a color scheme were blue and white; blue and gray; or blue, gray, and white.**

Capitalize names of specific academic or administrative departments and specific courses:

**The Department of English**

**The Registrar's Office**

**PSY 447 - Scientific and Philosophical Theories in Psychology**

Lowercase majors, minors, and programs (but capitalize proper nouns within them):

**He always wanted to add a minor in business management.**

**She switched and became an English major.**

Use only ONE space after a period.

Gordon's selected version of the Bible in written communication is the New International Version (NIV). Feel free to use the version of your choice, but when citing a Bible verse, either use the NIV or indicate the version that was used.

*Note:* The Bible and individual books of the Bible are **never italicized**.

## Exceptions to the Chicago Manual of Style

Every version of the Bible and therefore Gordon style shows possession with Jesus' and Moses'. Chicago, on the other hand, calls for Jesus's and Moses's.

The Adams School of Music and the Arts, and therefore Gordon style, have settled on "theatre," where Chicago calls for "theater."

Gordon style always writes phone numbers using periods, 978.867.4000, where Chicago calls for hyphens.

In Gordon style, academic degrees are punctuated (B.A., M.Ed.), where Chicago calls for unpunctuated (BA, MEd).

Press releases written for distribution should follow AP Style rather than Chicago/Gordon.

## Gordon College Glossary

### A Glossary of Gordon-Specific Terms

#### A

A. J. Gordon Fellow  
 A. J. Gordon Memorial Chapel (for first reference, Chapel on subsequent)  
 A. J. Gordon Scholar  
 a.m. / p.m. (lowercase, periods, spaced out from time)  
 Academic Success Center  
 Academic Programs Committee (APC)  
 the Adams Center for Music  
 Adams School of Music and the Arts  
 Admissions (the office)  
 admissions (adjective, as in "admissions counselor")  
 Advocates for a Sustainable Future  
 alum (informal, but avoids gender distinction)  
 alumni (plural, can be used for male and female combined)  
 alumnus (singular masculine), alumna (singular feminine), alumnae (two or more female)  
 Athletics ("Gordon Athletics" on first reference, use singular verb)

#### B

Baccalaureate (the service)  
 Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science  
 bachelor's degree (as a general reference)  
 the Balkans Semester for the Study of War and Peace  
 Barrington Center for the Arts (Barrington on second reference)  
 the Barrington Cinema  
 base camp (La Vida base camp)  
 the Bennett Athletic and Recreation Center; the Bennett Athletic Center; the Bennett Center  
 Bistro Two Fifty-Five  
 Board of Trustees (Board on second reference)  
 Brigham Athletic Complex  
 Brigham Athletic Complex Field  
 Brigham Athletic Complex Tennis Courts  
 Bromley Hall  

#### C

 the Career and Connection Institute (CCI)  
 Campus Events Council

Catacombs

the Center for Balance, Mobility and Wellness (CBMW)

the Falcone Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL)

the Center for Faith and Inquiry (CFI)

the Center for Student Counseling and Wellness (CSCW)

the Center for Technology Services (CTS)

chair (not chairman, chairwoman, or chairperson)

Chairs' Room

Chapel (when short for A. J. Gordon Memorial Chapel)

chapel (the regular service held at the Chapel)

Chapel Credit

Christmas at Gordon

Christmas Gala

Christmas Recess (or Christmas break, informally)

the Chapel Office (the administrative department)

the Chapel parking lot

Chase Hall

Chester's Place

the Clarendon Bell (the Bell)

Clarendon Commons

Clarendon Scholar

Commencement (not Graduation), Commencement Weekend

Common Core

Conrad Hall

Core curriculum, Core courses (capitalize first word only)

Coy Pond

Coy Pond Piranhas

## D

Dance team

Discovery (La Vida Discovery)

## E

Easter Recess (or Easter break, informally)

Emery Hall

Evans Hall

## F

faculty (plural) / faculty member (singular)

Faith, Learning, and Living (FLL)

Ferrin Hall

the Fighting Scot (mascot)

the Fighting Scots (athletic team nickname)

First-Year Experience

first-year student/s (avoid freshman and freshmen)

Fowler Campus

Fowler Circle

Frost Hall

Frost Overlook (patio behind Frost)

Fulton Hall

## G

the Gallery at Barrington Center for the Arts (the gallery)

Gavin Intramural Field

Gedney Hall

Gillies Lounge, Gillies

the Global Education Office (GEO)

the Gordon Honors Institute (GHI)

the Gordon College Bookstore (the bookstore)

the Gordon College Foundation

the Gordon College Student Association (not Government)

Gordon College Presidential Fellows

the Gordon Commission

the Gordon Fund (annual fund is acceptable in internal communication)

Gordon in Orvieto

Gordon Police

Gordon-sponsored

Gordon-owned

Grace Hall

graduation (do not capitalize; official name of the event is Commencement)

the Grapevine Consortium

The Great Conversation

Griswald Auditorium (in MacDonald Hall)

Gull Pond

## H

the Health Center

Herschend School of Education

Hilton Hall

the Hill (to refer informally to Nyland, Fulton, and Tavilla halls)

Homecoming and Family Weekend

Hypernikon

## J

J. Tec White Field

Jenks Library

Jerusalem and Athens Forum (JAF)

## K

the Ken Olsen Science Center (KOSC)

the Kenneth L. Pike Honors Program

Pike program, Pike Scholar

## L

La Vida, La Vida Center for Outdoor Education and Leadership

La Vida Equipment Building (formerly Outdoor Education Building)

La Vida Rock Gym

Lane Student Center

Lindsay Gate

the Loggia (in KOSC)

to log in (verb)

login (noun meaning username/password or the act of logging in)

## M

MacDonald Auditorium (in KOSC)

MacDonald Hall (the building)

MacInnis Hall

the mailroom

the Margaret Jensen Theatre (the Jensen Theatre; the black box theatre)

multidenominational (preferred description of Gordon's nonaffiliated status; no hyphen)

## N

North Shore

Nyland Hall

## O

Office of the Registrar

Office of Student Life (Student Life is acceptable for on-campus audience)

Orientation

## P

the Parent Grapevine

the Partners Program

the Phillips Walkway (from the Bell, past KOSC and Phillips)

Phillips Music Center

Phillips Recital Hall

Philosophy of Education (always capitalize in reference to Gordon's)

the PIT

the Physical Plant building

Pike Scholars (participants in the Kenneth L. Pike Honors Program)

poet-in-residence

pre-law concentration

pre-medicine concentration (pre-med is acceptable in informal pieces and on second reference)

pre-nursing concentration  
pre-occupational therapy concentration  
pre-optometry concentration  
pre-pharmacy concentration  
pre-physical therapy concentration  
pre-physician assistant concentration  
pre-professional  
pre-veterinarian concentration

PreK

pre-practicum

pre-registration

Princemere Journal

## Q

the Quad

Quad break

## R

Residence Life (the administrative office)

Rider Hall

the ropes course

Rodger Reception Center

Roosevelt Hall

Route 128

## S

School of Business

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

School of Ministry, Theology, and Biblical Studies

School of Psychology and Human Services

School of Science, Technology, and Health

shalom (lowercase)

Shields House

the softball field

Spring Recess (or spring break, informally)

Statement of Faith (always capitalize in reference to Gordon's)

Statement of Life and Conduct (always capitalize in reference to Gordon's)

student-athlete (as both noun and adjective)

Student Financial Services (SFS)

the Health Center

Student Health Services

Sunnyside

Sweaty-Toothed Madmen

## T

Tavilla Hall

The Tartan

Thanksgiving Recess (or Thanksgiving break, informally)

theatre (unless spelled differently by external department, building, group, etc.)

Theatre Arts (name of major and minor)

the Turf (informally for the Brigham Athletic Complex Field)

Tupper Hall

## V

the Village (includes Conrad Hall, Grace Hall, Hilton Hall, Rider Hall, MacInnis Hall)

Village house(s)

## W

Wilson Hall

Wilson House (formerly used as the President's house)

Woodland Parking Lot (Woodland)

## Writing About Faith

Gordon's selected version of the Bible for written communication is the New International Version (NIV). Any questions about spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or other orthographical concerns can be settled by consulting the NIV.

"Bible" is capitalized but "biblical" is not.

Capitalize Gospel when referring to a specific one (the Gospel of Mark) but do not capitalize "book" for specific books of the Bible (the book of Job).

## Spellings and Capitalizations

When referring to the Lord:

the Almighty, God Almighty  
the Creator  
the Father  
God, God the Father  
the Holy Spirit  
he, him, his  
the King, King of kings

the Lamb of God  
the Lord, Lord of all  
the Redeemer, our Redeemer  
the Savior, our Savior  
the Son, Son of God  
the Trinity

Other Biblical terms:

Acts, the Acts, Acts of the Apostles  
apostle, the apostles  
the Bible  
the Gospels (to refer to all four books);  
gospel in general references to the  
Christian message  
the Holy Bible  
King James Version, New International  
Version, etc.  
New Testament  
Old Testament

the Prophets (to refer to the Old  
Testament books of prophecy)  
the prophets (to refer to the individuals)  
Psalms; a psalm; Psalm 23; Psalms 23:2  
Scripture  
Word of God