



SP2 Style Guidelines

For most matters, please refer to the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook, [available online via Penn Key access through the Penn Libraries](#). Below is a list of common phrases and questions that occur in SP2 communications and written content.

Exception to AP style: Use the serial/Oxford comma

Use a comma to separate items in a series of three or more items.

- The flag is red, white, and blue.
- He would nominate Tom, Dick, Harry, or Jeannette.
- She goes to school, plays league soccer, and takes private dance lessons.

SP2 Titles

- University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice
- Penn's School of Social Policy & Practice
- Ampersand is part of School's official name and brand
- "SP2" is only acceptable after first reference
- "School" and "University" are capitalized when they refer to SP2 and Penn ("the School," "the University")

Degree Programs and Faculty

- Master of Social Work (MSW)
- Master of Science in Social Policy (MSSP)
- Master of Science in Nonprofit Leadership (NPL)
- Doctorate in Clinical Social Work (DSW)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare (PhD)

The formal names of specific degrees should always be capitalized in AP style:

- Bachelor of Science
- Master of Arts
- Master of Science

The forms bachelor's degree, bachelor's, master's degree and master's, doctoral degree are acceptable as general terms.

- I have a bachelor's in writing.
- I still have not pursued a master's degree.

If possession of an academic degree grants the title Dr. to an individual, do not use both the title and the abbreviation in the same reference.

- Incorrect: Dr. Ben Franklin, PhD Correct: Ben Franklin, PhD
- Correct: Dr. Ben Franklin

Capitalize a faculty title if it precedes a name.

Example: Professor LeVar Burton, PhD

Do not capitalize titles that follow names or stand alone.

Example: Dr. John Smith, professor in social policy

Courses

When referring to official course titles, use caps. Do not use quotation marks, italics, or any other formatting.

Example: They were required to take Social Work Fundamentals in their first year.

Official School, Center, & Project Names / Abbreviations

- Penn's School of Social Policy & Practice (SP2)
- Center for High Impact Philanthropy (CHIP)
- Center for Social Impact Strategy (CSIS)
- Center for Mental Health and Aging (CMHA)
- The Field Center for Children's Policy, Practice & Research
- Ortner Center on Violence & Abuse in Relationships
- Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP)
- Penn Restorative Entrepreneurship Program (PREP)
- Program for Religion and Social Policy Research (PRSPR)
- SexGen Policy Lab
- Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP)
- SP2 Penn Top 10
- OpenSP2
- Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR)
- Camra
- Initiative on Culture, Society, & Critical Policy Studies
- Health Ecologies Lab
- Social Justice and Arts Integration Initiative

- Data for Equitable Justice Lab
- Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR)

Alumni

Usage of *alumnus*, *alumni*, *alumna*, *alumnae*, *alum*, *alums*: The terms *alumnus* (singular) and *alumni* (plural) refer to people and/or men who are graduates, and *alumna* (singular) and *alumnae* (plural) refer to women who are graduates. If a gender-neutral term is desired, use *alum* or *alums*.

Affiliations: SP2 uses the program abbreviation followed by the year, rather than the abbreviations used by Penn Alumni Relations and the Penn Gazette.

- Sammy Davis Jr., MSW'13
- Fran Drescher, MSSP'05
- Simone de Beauvoir, DSW'22

Time

Time should be expressed as a figure followed by a.m. or p.m. (with periods). Do not use the 00 when referring to an hour. Use an en dash in between times when indicating a time span. If using “from” to indicate a time span, use “to.” Do not use “from” with a dash.

- Correct: The reading will occur at 8:30 a.m.
- Correct: A reception will be held 2–3 p.m.
- Correct: Classes take place from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Incorrect: The movies will screen from 2:30–4:30 p.m.

Numbers

- Spell out numbers under 10, unless when opening a sentence. Use figures for cents, dollars, dates, percentages, temperatures, and times.
- Correct: Last week, 40 students participated in the demonstration.
- Correct: The cohort contained seven students.
- Incorrect: 50 years ago, two courses were added to the School's MSW curriculum.

Quotation marks

- Use single quotation marks only for a quote within a quote.
- Do not use quotation marks for word emphasis.
- The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.

- The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter; they go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

Other

- Names: Use a person's first and last name the first time they are mentioned. On second reference, use only last name with no title.
- Percent: Always spell out, except in charts, where "%" is permissible.
- Faculty: Treat as plural. When singular, use "faculty member."
- Vita/vitae: Use "curriculum vitae" for the singular form, "curricula vitae" for the plural.

**If you have questions, please contact the strategic marketing and communications team
in the Office of Institutional Advancement:**

Juliana Rosati, senior associate director of strategic marketing and communications
Carson Easterly, marketing and communications writer
sp2news@sp2.upenn.edu