

### Web Style Guidelines

While communicating on the World Wide Web is much more interactive ("clickable") than for other media, the basis for all communication is the proper use of the English language. During Web site review, the Publications and PR staff checks for the basics (such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling) as well as for accuracy and consistency throughout your site, appropriate design, and navigation ease. The following guidelines may be helpful to medical school Web developers.

- Write simply and directly, using the active voice and complete sentences. Instead of "Dr. Smith is involved in teaching medical students and residents as well as the development of protocols for research," use "Dr. Smith teaches medical students and residents and develops research protocols." Think "economy," using fewer words or a shorter word to convey the same idea.
- Modern usage has moved to "downstyle," with far less capitalization than in the past. Capitalize titles before names, such as Provost Lawrence Dumas, but lower case titles that stand alone or follow a name, such as Lawrence Dumas, provost. Capitalize formal names of units, such as Department of Pathology, but lower case pathology department. Capitalize University or Feinberg School when referring to Northwestern University or The Feinberg School of Medicine.
- Per University style guidelines, use nongender-specific language, such as department chair, and eliminate periods in degrees (for example, BS, MS, MD, PhD, RN, and DDS).
- Use the comma before "and" or "or" in a series and between two independent clauses.
- Capitalize the first letters in Web and Net when referring to the World Wide Web or Internet, for example, Web site.
- Use "faculty" when referring to the entire body, otherwise, it's "faculty members."
- Using post office abbreviations for states is poor form. Use those state abbreviations you memorized in grammar school.
- In medical school titles, "clinical" goes before the discipline, such as professor of clinical surgery. Any variation of professor takes "of" before the discipline, such as associate professor of anesthesiology; use "in" with all other titles, such as associate in medicine, lecturer in preventive medicine, or instructor in dermatology.
- Provide a person's first name, middle initial, last name, and degree(s) on first reference in text, then use "Dr. (last name)" on second mention for those with MD or PhD degrees. Lists also should have complete information such as middle initials and degrees.
- Spell out numbers from one to nine, use numerals for 10 and above.
- Spell out percent in text rather than using the symbol.
- With abbreviations, spell out the name or phrase on first reference followed immediately by the abbreviation in parentheses, for example, "He conducts research on amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)."
- Electronic mail is e-mail, except at the beginning of a sentence when it's "E-mail."
- The abbreviation for facsimile is "fax" (lower case "f").
- For time of day, it's a.m. and p.m. (use lower case and periods).
- Establish a single style for journal references and stick to it. A recommended style is the one used in the Integrated Graduate Program in the Life Sciences recruitment booklet and on its Web site.
- Use zip + 4 with addresses.

**Names to Remember**

Evanston Northwestern Healthcare

Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine

Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine

National-Louis University, Evanston, Illinois

Rush Medical College

Rush University Medical Center

University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine

University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine

Jesse Brown VA Medical Center (formerly VA Chicago Health Care System)

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