

The Knight News Style Sheet

I. TITLES

- A. Use “Dr.” only for MDs
- B. **Academic departments** - lowercase when referring to a specific department or to a person’s title (unless it’s a proper noun).
 - 1. Ex: The sociology department, the director of sociology
 - 2. The English department (English is a proper noun, so it is capitalized).
 - 3. Everything is lowercase except for English and Spanish.
- C. “Queens College” on **first reference** and then “QC”
- D. “Spokesperson,” and “Councilmember” - keep it gender neutral
- E. “**Alumni**” is for plural male and female; “**alumnae**” for plural female
- F. First **and** last name on **first reference** and then use only the last name.
- G. **Legislative titles (Sen., Rep., etc.)**.
- H. The name in an attribution should go **BEFORE** the word “said.”
 - 1. Ex: “...Tom said” **NOT** “..said Tom.”
- I. Spell out the word by first reference, with the acronym in parenthesis, **then** use the acronyms
 - 1. Ex: “John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK)...” Again, spell out on first reference and then just use acronym after that
- J. **Academic majors** - Do not capitalize unless the major itself is a proper noun.
 - 1. Ex: history major vs. English major

II. DO’S AND DON’TS

- 1. When **quoting students**, write their **class standing** and **ages**.
- 2. Headlines should be active and catchy with **at least one verb**.
- 3. **Attribution** stays at the end of sentences
- 4. **No italicizing** in the paper
- 5. Write **book titles/films** in quotation marks **except** when citing other **newspapers**.
- 6. **Dashes** - always use long dashes with a space on either side of the dash.
 - a. Ex: Itamir’s wedding – the day we’ve all been waiting for – is this Sunday.

7. Monday - Friday; 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. (**correct**) vs. Monday thru Friday or 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (**incorrect**)
8. With **telephone numbers**, drop the parenthesis and use dashes.
 - a. Ex. 123 - 456 - 7890
9. **“Provost”** is a formal title and should be capitalized.
10. Toward NOT towards
11. **Mention names in captions**
 - a. Ex: Alumni mourn Palace Diner’s last meal.

III. GRAMMAR

- A. Always use **past** tense, most notably when referring to direct quotes.
- B. **Full dates** (month and day, or month + day + year) - abbreviate month
 1. Ex: “The results were counted on Oct. 3, 2007.”
 2. Month only - spell out month Ex: This past October...”
- C. **Academic classes** - Use **lowercase** unless the class has a proper noun included in it (ex: Advanced English), or a roman numeral (ex: Calculus II).
- D. **Numbers** - one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, 12...
- E. **Serial commas** - remove the last comma in a series.
 1. Ex: “purple, orange and yellow,” “Tom, Scott or Harry.”
Exception- if the last part requires a conjunction. Ex: “I had bread, butter, meatball and spaghetti.”
- F. Be careful about **homophones**:
 1. then, than, they’re, their, there
 2. Further, farther
 3. Your, you’re
- G. Before the word “which,” there is **almost always** a comma (Non-restrictive clause)
- H. If there are **passive sentences**, change those **verbs** to **active** ones.
- I. **Hyphens** only occur when **two nouns are acting as an adjective to describe another noun**.
 1. Ex: “he is a ten-year-old boy” is correct as is “he is a ten year old.”
- J. **People** are “more than” not “over.”
 1. Ex: “More than 42 million people attended...”

K. **“Nearly”** - only for geographical distance

L. **Do not use a lot of acronyms**, it gets confusing

M. **“Firstly”** is not a word.

N. **Punctuation** is always inside the quotation marks.

IV. CAPITALIZATION:

12. **The Knight News** - always capitalized (including “The”)

13. **Quad** - Capitalized when referring to the specific area of Queens College, or any other university or campus.

14. **Professor** - Always lowercase (except at the beginning of a sentence).

15. **Standings** - Do not capitalize class standings unless referring to a specific position.

16. “Free Hour” NOT free hour, “academic senate” (not capitalized).

17. **Semesters** - lower cased

a. Ex: fall, spring, winter, summer

18. **U.S. NOT US**

19. **Lowercase “board of trustees.”**

20. In **headlines**, only the first letter of the first word is capitalized, except for names.