For quick reference, here are some common writing style tips from the Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota Writing Style Guide. The full A-to-Z guide is on the website at smumn.edu/writingstyle. It is also available along with other resources, such as a Brand Book that includes Key Brand Messages and The Saint Mary’s Promise, at smumn.edu/brand. It is updated at least annually by the Office of Marketing and Communication. Contact Marketing and Communication with questions or for assistance by calling 507-457-1497 or 612-728-5119.

**adviser/advisor**
- Use "-er" spelling

**alumni usage (also see Class Year)**
- Here is proper usage, based on gender and whether singular or plural:
  - alumnus—one male graduate
  - alumni—multiple all-male graduates, or mixed male and female graduates
  - alumna—one female graduate
  - alumnae—a group of female graduates (used only at all-female schools)
  - alum/alums—acceptable for informal usage to show any mixture of male or female graduates

**ampersands (&)**
- Avoid ampersands; use “and” unless it is part of an official, legal name, such as Procter & Gamble. Do not use when referring to our Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs.

**Brother**
- Male member of a Catholic religious order, such as the De La Salle Christian Brothers. Spell out and capitalize (“Brother John Doe, FSC” or “Brother John”). Use FSC in a formal, full name on first reference. “Brother John” is acceptable on second reference.
- Brother William Mann. Use his full title accordingly: “Brother William Mann, FSC, president of Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota” on first reference. Afterward it’s Brother William.
- Brother Robert Smith, FSC ’76, Ph.D., is vice president for the Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs.

**campus**
- Capitalize when referring to specific campuses: Twin Cities Campus (not Minneapolis Campus, not Twin Cities campus, not Twin Cities’ Campus) and Winona Campus. If referring to both campuses together, use lowercase: Twin Cities and Winona campuses.

**class year**
- Use class years to identify Saint Mary’s University alumni. Here are proper notation examples: Jane Doe ’79 (for bachelor’s, B.A. or B.S.), John Smith M’79 (for master’s), John Smith D’79 (for doctorates), John Smith C’79 (for graduate certificates), and Brother Robert Smith, FSC ’76, Ph.D., (for Christian Brothers).
- For a married alumna, here is an example: Mary (Smith) Jones ’88.
- Capitalize “class” when referring to a Saint Mary’s graduating class. Example: Class of 1985.

**comma**
- Use a comma before the last conjunction (“and” or “or”) in a series. In other words, use the serial comma. Example: Our mission says, “awakens, nurtures, and empowers.”

**dashes and hyphens**
- Hyphens (-) are used to hyphenate words when modifiers, such as “My one-year-old son walked for the first time today”; for hyphenated last names; and in phone numbers, 000-000-0000.
- En dashes (–) are used to show duration or range, such as “The open house will be held 7–9 p.m.”
- Em dashes (—) are used to indicate a pause, set apart clauses, or serve as a spacing character. Do not surround with spaces.

**degrees**
- We award bachelor’s, master’s, graduate certificate, specialist, and doctoral degrees. Also acceptable uses include bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, B.A. in (degree name with initial capitalization) and Bachelor of Science in (degree name with initial capitalization). Incorrect usages include: bachelors and masters (missing apostrophes); doctorate degrees (it’s a doctoral degree or a doctorate).
departments/offices/schools
- Capitalize departments: History Department, Biology Department, Admission Office, Graduate School of Education, School of Graduate and Professional Programs.

font style
- Gotham is the primary typeface of Saint Mary’s University and is used by the Office of Marketing and Communication. This document is in Gotham. As an alternative, use Trebuchet, a free font that comes on every university computer, to fit with the brand guidelines.

headlines and email subject lines
- Keep short, engaging, and descriptive; best practice is under seven words. Include a subject and a verb.

job titles
- In general, lowercase and spell out titles except when they precede an individual’s name. Example: John Doe, president, met with the faculty. Why did President John Doe meet with the faculty?

Lasallian
- Variations include Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Saint La Salle, De La Salle Christian Brothers, De La Salle. We are a Lasallian Catholic institution, yet what that means is not understood by many key audiences. Refer to The Saint Mary’s Promise and Key Brand Messages at smumn.edu/brand for how to communicate.

locations
- Spell out buildings and capitalize names. Example: “Brother Louis Hall 201.”

majors/minors
- Lowercase unless a language, a proper noun, or the formal name of a degree. Example: John Doe majored in criminal justice with a minor in Spanish. Jill Jones earned a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare and Human Services Management from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota.

numerals
- Spell out zero through nine, use numerals for 10 or greater. Similarly, spell out first through ninth, and use numerals for 10 and so on. Exception: use numerals in headlines.

Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota
- Always spell out fully on first reference. Do not abbreviate as SMU.

Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs
- Avoid writing or saying SGPP.
- It is a singular proper noun that takes a singular verb agreement. Example: Our Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs offers graduate and professional programs for working adults.
- It is acceptable to say or write: Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota and its Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs is based on the Twin Cities Campus in Minneapolis.

SMU
- Avoid. Instead say/write Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota on first reference and Saint Mary’s University or Saint Mary’s on later references in the same document.

SMUMN
- Acceptable abbreviation for social media use, email, and website addresses. When speaking, say S-M-U-M-N rather than saying “Smoo-Minn.”

times and dates
- Examples of correct usage: 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., 8 a.m.–5 p.m. (Note: use an en dash; option+hyphen or alt+0150 depending on operating system/software; with no spaces)
- Thursday, May 2 (adding the current year is not necessary, unless to prevent confusion)
- No need to use _th, _rd, _st in dates: June 1 (not June 1st).
- Abbreviate months when used with dates. Jan. 1, Feb. 2, Aug. 3, Sept. 4, Oct. 5, Nov. 6, Dec. 7, but spell out March, April, May, June, and July.
- Time, date, then place is the preferred order. Example: The 2015 Hendrickson Forum will be held 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Wednesday, April 9 in Saint Mary’s University Center on the Twin Cities Campus.