



Writing Style Guide

Updated April 2018

The DWFI/NWC Writing Style Guide provides a framework for ensuring consistency and clarity in all written communication for the organizations. It is a tool to help staff communicate effectively to meet the needs of various audiences. The guide will be updated, as needed, to include new references.

General style rules:

- Follow Associated Press Stylebook rules for general composition:
<https://www.apstylebook.com/online/>
- Follow University of Nebraska–Lincoln style guide for academic references:
<http://unlcms.unl.edu/ucomm/styleguide/>

Font standards:

- Use Arial for headlines
- Use Calibri 12 pt., single spaced for sub-headings and body copy

DWFI and NWC specific style standards:

- Proper full name on first reference, Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute at the University of Nebraska.
- Use acronym DWFI in subsequent references. May use “institute” (with lowercase “i”) to avoid redundancy. May repeat use of Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute where appropriate, such as titles.
- Use NWC after first reference of the Nebraska Water Center, part of the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute at the University of Nebraska. May repeat use of Nebraska Water Center where appropriate.
- Phone numbers: Use dots, not dashes: (+1) 402.472.5500. Include (+1) to indicate North American calling code for international audiences.
- Use “[Insert Year] Water for Food Global Conference” on first reference.

To appear at the end of all news releases:

The **Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute** (waterforfood.nebraska.edu) at the University of Nebraska was founded in 2010 to address the global challenge of achieving food security with less stress on water resources through improved water management in agricultural and food systems. We are committed to ensuring a water and food secure world while maintaining the use of water for other human and environmental needs. Connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and the [Water for Food Blog](#).

DWFI is one of four interdisciplinary, university-wide institutes that leverage talent and research-based expertise from across the University of Nebraska system to focus on complex state, national and global challenges.

Word counts for bios

- Plenary Speakers: 200-250 words
- Panelists, Moderators, Others: 150-175 words

General guidelines for bios

- Follow AP Style
- Eliminate unnecessary capitalization
- For consistency, use roughly the same order for each speaker's bio: what he or she does, interesting facts about his or her work, past roles that are relevant to a current one, educational background, special boards/committees/responsibilities and honors or awards.
- In the lead, try to explain the speaker's research interests or the impact of his or her work. The position name is already included in the data section and doesn't need repeating.
- In most cases, do not include the years in which people received their degrees, unless it's recent. Exceptions have been made for board certifications.
- To save space and make the narrative flow easier, avoid resume-style descriptions of how long somebody stayed with an organization.

Body copy

Academic degrees, departments, titles

Use AP style

Acronyms

OK on second reference. When using them, put them in parentheses after the first reference. Eliminate acronyms used only once.

Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Board of Supervisors and similar:

Lowercase, unless part of the proper name (e.g., U.S. Committee on Irrigation and Drainage Board of Directors)

Book titles, presentation names, publication names and similar:

Italicize

Courtesy titles:

Avoid using, as not everyone specifies a courtesy title on the conference registration form. In most cases, the educational background in a speaker's bio will specify his or her advanced degrees.

Degree titles:

No possessive for bachelor of science, master of science, master of business administration, etc. Lower case.

Possessives ARE needed for more “general” degree descriptions e.g., He holds a master’s degree in soil science.

Spell out degree names instead of using abbreviations.

Lowercase most degree names, except those the AP style book specifies to capitalize. (e.g., bachelor’s degree in civil engineering, not Civil Engineering.)

Use punctuation in credentials, e.g., Ph.D. not PhD

Initials:

No spaces after periods. (Ex: Judith C.N. Lungu, not Judith C. N. Lungu)

Job titles:

Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual's proper name.

Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before one or more names. A formal title generally is one that denotes a scope of authority, professional activity or academic activity. Other titles serve primarily as occupational descriptions: astronaut John Glenn, movie star John Wayne, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter.

Numbers:

Use AP style

State abbreviations:

Use AP style for copy: The names of the 50 U.S. states should be spelled out when used in the body of a story, whether standing alone or in conjunction with a city, town, village or military base.

USDA-ARS:

Spell out in the data section, abbreviate as USDA-ARS in copy

Em Dash:

Most newspapers — and all that follow AP style — insert a space before and after the em dash.

Additional styles

adviser

Not advisor, per AP style and UNL style guide

Alternate furrow irrigation

No hyphen

Acceleron® seed treatment

Include the registered trademark symbol.

Agroecosystem

One word, no hyphen

Aridoculture

One word, no hyphen

Benefiting, benefitting

One T, not two.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Use full name on first reference. Gates Foundation is OK thereafter. Use ampersand (&), per Gates Foundation branding guidelines.

Bhakra Beas, not Bhakra-Beas

The name is used both ways, but the World Bank omits the hyphen in most cases.

Buffett, Warren (or Howard or Howard Jr.)

Not Buffet

Bullet lists

AP style uses dashes, not bullets. OK to use bullets.

End each bullet item with a period, not semicolons.

Capitalize the first word following the bullet.

CEO

OK to use in all references, per AP style

CGIAR

CGIAR on all references.

CIMMYT

Stands for International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center. Use full name on first reference and CIMMYT thereafter.

Decision-makers, decision-maker

Hyphenate

DEKALB® brand hybrids

Include the registered trademark symbol.

doctoral/doctorate

Doctorate is a noun; doctoral is the adjective: A person may have a doctorate, but not a doctorate degree.

Dr.

Per AP Style, avoid use of the honorific title Dr. in reference to an academic who has earned a doctorate. Use "Ph.D." after the name instead. Use Dr. in first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who holds a doctor of dental surgery, doctor of medicine, doctor of optometry, doctor of osteopathic medicine, doctor of podiatric medicine, or doctor of veterinary medicine. Dr. may be used in reference to a medical doctor.

Drought tolerant

No hyphen

Faculty Fellow

Title designation for a Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute Faculty Fellow. Treat as any other title, capitalize before a proper name, lowercase faculty fellow if it follows a name or is used independently.

Examples:

- Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute Faculty Fellow Haishun Yang, presented...
- Haishun Yang, University of Nebraska–Lincoln agronomy professor and Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute faculty fellow, presented...
- Our distinguished group of faculty fellows includes...

FAO

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Not Agricultural. FAO is acceptable on second reference to this U.N. agency.

Geographic locations

Include country along with city and state. Example: "Lincoln, Nebraska, USA"

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

"The" is part of its proper name.

Green Revolution

Capitalize in all references

Gross domestic product

Spell out on first reference; use GDP on second reference. AP style.

Groundwater

One word

Groundwater-surface water connection

Headline® fungicide

Include the registered trademark symbol.

High Plains Aquifer

Not Ogallala aquifer

Institute

Lowercase on second reference after referring to the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute at the University of Nebraska. This rule also applies to other organizations that include the world institute.

Interdisciplinary

Not inter-disciplinary

IRRI, International Rice Research Institute

IWMI, IWMI Comprehensive Assessment

Stands for International Water Management Institute

Use the organization's full name on first reference.

On subsequent references to the comprehensive assessment, use *IWMI Comprehensive Assessment*. Italicize the report's name.

Jain Irrigation Systems Ltd.

The umbrella organization of several micro-irrigation companies. Anil Jain is managing director.

Jain Irrigation Inc.

Proper name. Part of Jain Irrigation Systems Ltd. Use Jain Irrigation on second reference.

Lake McConaughy

Life cycle analysis/life cycle assessment

Life cycle is two words, no hyphen

Millennium Development Goals

A United Nations program. (Abbreviate as U.N., per AP style)

Managed-stress

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. (managed-stress screen)

Marker assisted selection:

No hyphen. Some sources use the hyphen; many others omit it.

MENA

Acronym referring to the Middle East and North Africa region.

Micro-irrigation

Hyphenate. (micro-irrigation technologies, micro-irrigation techniques)

Millions, billions

Use figures except in casual uses (see AP style)

McKinsey & Company

Use McKinsey & Company, and McKinsey thereafter.

Monsanto Co.

Use Monsanto Co. on first reference, and Monsanto thereafter.

Natural Resources Districts

Resources, not Resource

Next-generation

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. (next-generation sequencing)

No-till

Non-consumptive

FAO's style is one word, hyphenated

NU

Use as the abbreviation for the University of Nebraska system. Do not use UN.

Optimum® AQUAmax

Include the registered trademark symbol

Per capita, per-capita

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. (per-capita grain production)

Policymaker, policymakers

Presentation titles:

The titles (including style) should match the website and program.

QTL:

Spell out quantitative trait locus on first reference

Rainfed, not rain-fed

Rainforest

Rainwater

Robert B. Daugherty Foundation

Roundup Ready® technology:

Include the registered trademark symbol.

Runoff:

One word

Sandhills

São Francisco River

SIWI, Stockholm International Water Institute

smallholder

no hyphen (smallholder farmers)

Southern Cone

Capitalize because it's recognized as a region.

Speaker titles, names, organizations

These should match the website and the program.

States

Spell out full state names, not abbreviations, in composition, e.g., Dick Cavett is a native of Lincoln, Nebraska. (not Lincoln, Neb.)

Subheads

Use down style (Need for action, not Need for Action)

sub-Saharan Africa

AP style is "sub-Saharan Africa" with the first s lowercase unless it starts the sentence. However, it's been "Sub-Saharan" in the proceedings and 2014 conference materials.

Sugarcane

One word

Surface water

Two words (surface water resources, surface water efficiency, surface water runoff)

Surface and groundwater

Surface or groundwater

Surface water-groundwater connection

Testcross**Total factor productivity****Transdisciplinary**

Not trans-disciplinary

UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

User proper name on first reference, followed by UNESCO-IHE. Alternatively, may use “UNESCO-IHE, the United Nations' water education institute in Delft, the Netherlands.”

United States, U.S.

Abbreviate as U.S. in general references. In quotes, use United States if the speaker used that phrasing. For organization titles that include “United States,” use the proper name when spelling out on first reference.

University

Capitalize only when using with the rest of a formal title, such as “University of Nebraska at Omaha.” When speaking of the University of Nebraska in general, or other universities in general, lowercase.

University of Nebraska at Kearney

In written communication, when first mentioned or cited, the full name, “University of Nebraska at Kearney,” should be spelled out, immediately followed with “UNK” in parentheses (UNK). Thereafter, references should cite “UNK.”

University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Remember the en dash! In written communication, when first mentioned or cited, the full name, “University of Nebraska–Lincoln,” should be spelled out and used prior to or in conjunction with “Nebraska,” or “the university.” Per campus branding guidelines, avoid using “UNL.”

University of Nebraska Medical Center

In written communication, when first mentioned or cited, the full name, “University of Nebraska Medical Center,” should be spelled out, immediately followed with “UNMC” in parentheses (UNMC). Thereafter, references should cite “UNMC.”

University of Nebraska at Omaha

In written communication, when is first mentioned or cited, the full name, “University of Nebraska at Omaha,” should be spelled out, immediately followed with “UNO” in parentheses (UNO). Thereafter, references should cite “UNO.”

USAID

U.S. Agency for International Development

Valmont Industries

Proper name. Use Valmont on second reference.

Waghad Project**Water-scarce, water-stressed**

Hyphenate when used as an adjective. (water-scarce regions)

Water use efficiency

No hyphen

West Delta

Proper name of a region in Egypt. Capitalize.

World Bank

Proper name of this organization. Lowercase ‘the’ when it precedes World Bank.

YieldGard® technologies**Calendar****2018 - Water and food-related observances and events**January

- Nebraska Water Center Spring Seminar Series, UNL East Campus, Hardin Hall, Jan. 17 through April 18
- Nebraska Natural Resources Districts Legislative Conference; Embassy Suites, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA, Jan. 23-24, 2018
- Water for Food International Forum, Farmer-led Irrigated Agriculture: Seeds of Opportunity; Washington, D.C., USA – January 29-30, 2018

February

- World Wetlands Day – Feb. 2

March

- 8th World Water Forum, Brasilia, Brazil – March 18-23, 2018
- National Groundwater Awareness Week – March 11-17, 2018
- International Women's Day – March 8, 2018
- National Agriculture Day – March 20, 2018
- World Water Day – March 22, 2018

April

- Earthstock – UNL Sustainability Festival – Month of April
- World Health Day – April 7, 2018
- UNL Weatherfest – April 7, 2018
- 2018 Great Plains Symposium – April 18-20, 2018
- Earth Day – April 22, 2018
- Water for Food Research Forum – April 26, 2018

May

June

- American Society of Civil Engineers World Environmental and Water Resources Congress 2018 – June 3-7, 2018
- World Environment Day – June 5, 2018
- Crane Trust's 12th Platte River Basin Ecosystem Symposium – June 5-6, 2018
- Science Education Partnership Award Health & Science Fun Camp – June 10-13, 2018
- World Population Day – June 11, 2018
- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought – June 17, 2018
- Universities Council on Water Resources/National Institutes for Water Resources Annual Conference – June 26-28, 2018
- Nebraska Water Center Water and Natural Resources Tour – June 26-29, 2018

July

- UN Sustainable Development High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development covering SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 (NYC) – July 9-18, 2018

August

- Water Quality Month – August (all month)
- 2018 International Conference and 69th IEC Meeting of the ICID – August 12-17, 2018
- Stockholm World Water Week – Aug. 26-31, 2018

September

- Husker Harvest Days; Grand Island, Nebraska, USA – Sept 11-13, 2018

October

- National Farmers Day – Oct. 12, 2018
- 7th Africa Water Week – Oct. 15-19, 2018
- World Food Day – Oct. 16, 2018
- Nebraska Water Center’s North Central Region Water Symposium – October 24-26, 2018. (Reception/dinner on 24th and conference on 25 and 26)

November

- World Science Day for Peace and Development – Nov. 10, 2018
- Nebraska section NWWA/ASCE meeting – November 2018

December

- Nebraska Power Farming Show (Lancaster County Event Center) – December 4-6, 2018
- World Soil Day – Dec. 5, 2018
- American Geophysical Union Fall 2018 Meeting (Washington, D.C., USA) – Dec. 10-14, 2018

2019

2019 Water for Food Global Conference; Nebraska Innovation Campus, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA – April 29- May1, 2019

Multi-year

U.N. Decade of Sustainable Energy for All – 2014-2024

U.N. Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification – 2010-2020

U.N. Decade on Biodiversity – 2010-2020