

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, 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 **Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute** ([waterforfood.nebraska.edu](http://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](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

DWFI is one of three 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.

**Business Model Canvas**

Capitalize the first letter of each word.  
Used frequently in the DWFI policy's teams work and refers to a strategic management tool to quickly and easily define and communicate a business idea or concept.

**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.