

Gordon-Conwell Editorial Style Guide (Overview)

Our Seminary

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary has a hyphen between “Gordon” and “Conwell.” Our name can be shortened to “Gordon-Conwell” but must not be abbreviated to “GCTS.” For campus names, use an em dash between Gordon-Conwell and the campus’ (Gordon-Conwell—Hamilton). When using the word “campus” in a sentence, it is lowercase. (“. . . on the Charlotte campus.”)

Abbreviations

Degree Titles: MDiv, MATS, MACM, MAGL, MACO/MACC, ThM, DMin, PhD, MAOT, MANT, MABL, MATH, MAEM, MAME, MAR, MABS, MACT, MACL, MAYM, MAUM

Alumni Information:

- 1 degree: John Doe (MDiv ‘94)
- 2 degrees, same year: Jack Doe (MDiv & MACO ‘14)
- 2 degrees, different years: Jane Doe (MDiv ‘10, DMin ‘15)

Capitalization & Titles

Capitalize	Lower case
Divisions (Division of Biblical Studies)	departments and offices
Titles that precede personal names (President Sunquist)	titles used as a description or that follow a name (“Dr. Sunquist is the president.”)
Seasonal semester titles (Spring 2023)	seasons (“Classes start this spring.”)
Bible, Word of God, Scripture(s)	biblical, scriptural
God, Lord, Jesus, Holy Spirit	pronouns referring to God (he, him, his)
Any of the four Gospels (Gospel of John)	gospel, referring to the “good news”
Kingdom (God’s Kingdom, Kingdom work)	
Church, in reference to the universal church, the whole body of Christ, or a specific church	church, in reference to a place of worship, or building

Books & Movies: Italicize titles. Use capitalization on social media when italics aren’t available.
Articles, Lectures, and Book Chapters: Use capitalization and quotations.

Dates, Times, & Numbers

Date Formats:

- Do not use “th” or “st” or “rd” on dates.
- When writing a timeframe, use an en dash with no spaces on either side or from/through (Monday–Friday; August 4–7; August 4 through 7.)
- Referencing decades: 1980s / ‘80s

Time Format: 10:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
↑ include space ↑ lowercase with periods
En dash, no spaces

Misc.

- Embed links when possible. If writing it out is necessary, do not include “https://” and avoid “www” when possible on social media.
- Only use a single space between sentences.
- Use an Oxford comma before the last item in a series: “apples, oranges, and bananas.”

Gordon-Conwell Editorial Style Guide (Full)

INTRODUCTION

Consistency is one of the most important elements of good communication. Please use this style guide as a reference for how your text should appear in web and print communications for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Examples of such communications include text for news releases, websites, social media, blogs, brochures, magazines, the annual report, and other web, and print publications. When in doubt, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* or check recent content on the Gordon-Conwell website. Please contact communications@gordonconwell.edu with questions.

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

In general, avoid acronyms and internal jargon so that communication is clear to a range of audiences.

The first time a title, program, or institution appears in a publication, spell it out and include the abbreviation in parentheses. For the remaining references, use the abbreviation.

“The Masters of Arts in Counseling (MACO) degree program is one of the most popular on campus. Each year, MACO graduates numerous students who are well equipped to counsel people in a number of environments.”

Do not abbreviate Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary “GCTS,” but rather use the short-hand “Gordon-Conwell,” with a hyphen between “Gordon” and “Conwell.” Use of “GCTS” is only permitted in social media handles and hashtags and when the website address needs to be shortened because of space limitations (gcts.edu).

Academic Degrees

Capitalize the first letter of the abbreviated word only, and do not include periods.

MDiv, MA, DMin, ThM, ThD, PhD

For degree programs, use all caps and no punctuation.

MAOT, MANT, MABL, MATH, MAEM, MAME, MACO, MAR, MABS, MACC, MACT, MAEL, MAYM, MAUM

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Bachelor of Science	master's application	"She has a bachelor's degree in art."
Master of Divinity	master's students	"She earned a Master of Arts in Religion."
Doctor of Ministry	master's level	"He is pursuing his master's in Old Testament."

Alumni and Emeriti Information

Alumnus/emertus = singular male
Alumnae/emertae = plural female

Alumna/emerta = singular female
Alumni/emerti = plural male and female

In most cases, a campus should not be listed alongside alumni information. The exception is when listing campuses would help to highlight unity, diversity, and collaboration across campuses.

"Alumna Grace Miller (M.Div. '98) is a counselor in Beverly, MA."

"Alumna Grace Miller (M.Div. '98—Hamilton) and alumnus Scott Wilber (MATS '14—Charlotte) were featured in a Christianity Today article."

If an alumnus has more than one degree from Gordon-Conwell, separate the degrees with a comma.

Sarah Baker (MDiv '10, DMin '15)

Campus Abbreviations

Use an Em dash between Gordon-Conwell and the campus' city name. [Learn how to insert an em dash.](#)

Gordon-Conwell—Hamilton
Gordon-Conwell—Boston
Gordon-Conwell—Charlotte
Gordon-Conwell—Jacksonville

Boston's campus is technically the Campus for Urban Ministerial Education and is abbreviated CUME, in all caps and without periods. The primary reference should be Gordon-Conwell—Boston or the Boston campus.

States, Regions and United States

Spell out when state names appear alone. Use postal abbreviations when appearing with a city. For states with two words (North Carolina), include periods between the two letters (N.C.).

"I am from Georgia."

"I am from Beverly, MA."

U.S. (with periods) is acceptable in all uses.

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Use a comma after states and years.

“The May 1, 2012, event in Raleigh, NC, was a success.”

In general, lowercase north, south, northeast, northern, etc. when they indicate compass directions; capitalize when they designate regions.

“He drove east to southern Atlanta. The cold front is moving west.”

“The developing storm in the Midwest will bring showers to the East Coast. High temperatures will prevail in the Western states.”

“The customs of the East are different from those of the West.”

“She had a Southern accent, which came as a surprise to her neighbor, a Northerner.”

The following cities do not require a state name:

Atlanta	Milwaukee
Baltimore	Minneapolis
Boston	New Orleans
Chicago	New York
Cincinnati	Oklahoma City
Cleveland	Philadelphia
Dallas	Phoenix
Denver	Pittsburgh
Detroit	St. Louis
Honolulu	Salt Lake City
Houston	San Antonio
Indianapolis	San Diego
Las Vegas	San Francisco
Los Angeles	Seattle
Miami	Washington, D.C.

CAPITALIZATION & TITLES

Academic Divisions and Staff Departments

Capitalize the Division of Biblical Studies, Division of Christian Thought, and Division of Practical Theology; departments and offices are not capitalized.

Esq.

Do not use Esq. after the names of trustees who are lawyers.

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Board, Board Member, Board of Trustees

Do not capitalize. These are capitalized above only because they serve as a section heading.

“The Gordon-Conwell board of trustees are stewards of the seminary’s physical resources, intellectual climate, human relationships, and spiritual resources.”

“Chair of the Board of Trustees Bishop Claude Alexander has served as the Senior Pastor of The Park Church in Charlotte, North Carolina for the past 29 years.”

Fall/Spring/Summer Semester

Seasons should appear in lowercase, as should the names of semesters in most instances. Capitalize only when used in a title, header, or as the first word in a sentence.

When the descriptor stands alone, capitalize it followed by the year.

“We’re still accepting applications for Fall 2021 admission, but if you’re interested in enrolling during the spring semester, Spring 2022 registration will begin in December.”

BIBLE CITATIONS AND RELIGIOUS TERMS

Bible Citations

The first time a translation of the Bible is references, give the book (abbreviated), chapter, and verse, followed by the name of the edition (not italicized) in parentheses.

Footnote/endnote: 1 Thess. 4:11 (NIV).

Social media and other digital formats: (1 Thess 4:11, NIV)

Omit the translation/version of the Bible for future references.

Note: Gordon-Conwell does not have a preferred Bible translation.

Terms for the Word of God

Capitalize the word Bible; biblical is not capitalized.

“The Bible is the inerrant word of God. Seminary helps students understand and apply biblical narrative to their everyday life.”

Capitalize Word of God and Scripture(s); scriptural is not capitalized.

Personal Pronoun for God

Capitalize God, Lord, Jesus, and Holy Spirit. Do not capitalize the personal pronoun he, his, or him in reference to any of the aforementioned pronouns.

Gospel

Capitalize when referring to the four Gospels (i.e., Gospel of John); gospel, referring to the “good news,” is not capitalized.

Kingdom

In reference to God’s Kingdom or Kingdom work, should be capitalized.

Religious Events and Concepts

Capitalize events and concepts of theological importance. However, do not capitalize the terms when use generically, and do not capitalize doctrines and principles.

Events and Concepts	Terms Used Generically	Doctrines and Principles
the Creation	“God’s creation...”	atonement
the Crucifixion	“For the Romans, crucifixion	original sin
the Exodus	was a common form of	resurrection
the Fall	execution.”	
the Second Coming		
the Resurrection		

Church (Little C) and Church (Big C)

Church with a capital C refers to the universal church, the body of Christ; church with a lowercase c refers to a place of worship, the building. Capitalize when stating the name of a particular church.

“His home church, Hamilton Congregational Church, sent him on a year-long mission trip for the purpose of serving the Church in Africa.”

Evangelical and Protestant

"Protestant" should be capitalized.

The capitalization of "Evangelical" depends on context. When used as a proper noun referring to a specific religious denomination or movement (e.g., "Evangelical Lutheran Church" or “Evangelicals believe such and such . . .”), it is capitalized. When used as a general adjective describing a theological stance or characteristic (e.g., "evangelical zeal"), it is lowercase unless it begins a sentence.

Denominations

Capitalize names of denominations.

“Gordon-Conwell’s student population is comprised of X denominations— including Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Methodist.”

Do not hyphenate or capitalize the terms nondenominational, multidenominational, and interdenominational.

Seminary

Seminary is only capitalized at the start of a sentence or in an institution's title. It is never capitalized outside of these occurrences.

Specific Gordon-Conwell Terms

Capitalize the following:

Capital Campaign	Mentored Ministry
Education Fund	Partnership Program
Founder's Society	Digital Live
Latino and Global Ministries	

Titles of Books, Articles, Courses, and Events

Capitalize the first letter in important words in the title, leaving three-or-less letter filler words lowercase, unless they are important to the structure of the title.

Crafting a Rule of Life: An Invitation to the Well-Ordered Way

Books—when italic formatting is available, use italics to indicate a title of a book. When italic formatting is unavailable (e.g., social media), only use capitalization.

Web and Print: *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*

Social Media: Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels

Articles, Lectures, and Book Chapters—use capitalization and quotations.

“Learning Outcomes for Teachers”

Titles of Positions

Capitalize titles attached to a personal name. The title is lowercase when used alone as a description or follows a name.

“President Scott Sunquist writes a weekly blog post.”

“Scott Sunquist is the president of Gordon-Conwell.”

“Mateus de Campos, dean of the Hamilton campus, . . .”

Always capitalize the title of a professorial position.

PUNCTUATION

Double Spaces

Gordon-Conwell only uses single spaces between sentences.

Ellipsis

When words are left out of a quotation, an ellipsis of three dots (. . .) takes their place.

If the first segment of the quotation could be read as a complete sentence, a period comes before the ellipsis for a total of four dots (. . . .). The first word after an ellipsis is capitalized if it begins a new sentence. When a quotation deliberately trails off without finishing, it ends with three dots.

Dates

Do not abbreviate weekdays or months and do not use “th” or “st” or “rd” on dates, only centuries. When writing a timeframe, use an En dash with no spaces on either side. Numerals should be used for dates, except for formal invitations and programs (e.g., commencement).

Friday, May 23, 1982
November–December

Monday–Friday
August 4–7

When listing dates in a sentence, from/through may replace the En dash.

“The conference will be held from August 4 through 6.”

1980s / ‘80s

Use a comma after states and years.

“The May 1, 2012, event in Boston, MA, was a success.”

Time Format

When writing a timeframe, use an En dash with no spaces on either side.

Use lowercase letters for a.m. and p.m.

Use a space between the numbers and a.m. and p.m. and periods between a.m. and p.m.

10:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

For events that aren’t campus-specific, include a time zone. Abbreviate Eastern Time as (ET).

Email and Web Addresses

Embed links when possible. If writing it out is necessary, do not include “https://” and avoid “www” when possible on social media. When an email or web address ends a sentence, finish with a period.

e-commerce
e-book
email

webcast
livestream
web feed

webmaster
the Web
web page

website
webcam

the Internet

Em Dashes

Em dashes are used without a space before or after the dash. To make an Em dash in MS Word, use two hyphens, type the next word, and hit the spacebar. The hyphens should merge into one Em dash.

En Dashes

En dashes are used to indicate ranges: date and time, pages, numbers, ages, months, etc. To make an En dash in MS Word, hit the spacebar, hyphen, then spacebar again. When you type the second word (which the En dash will subsequently link to the first word) and hit the spacebar, the hyphen will become an En dash. No spaces are used before or after the dash.

45–50 clowns

Ages two–three

Hyphens

Gordon-Conwell has a hyphen.

When the second word in a pair is capitalized, use a hyphen.

non-English speaking

When the last letter of a prefix is the same as the first letter in the second word, use a hyphen.

anti-intellectual

pre-existing

Hyphenate figures, numerals and dimensions.

three-year-old

68,000-square-foot

ten- to twenty-year sentence

The following words do not need a hyphen:

vice president

postgraduate

distance learning

nonprofit

parachurch

email

Full-tuition is hyphenated in most cases.

Debt-free is hyphenated in most cases.

In person is an adverb and does not require a hyphen (“Join us in person). In-Person is an adjective and requires a hyphen (“Join us for an in-person seminar.”)

Serial Comma

Gordon-Conwell uses the Oxford comma before the last item in a series.

“Debbie, Nicole, and Amanda work in the marketing department.”

NUMBERS

Fractions

Fractions are written out, except when containing whole numbers.

“About one-fifth of her salary goes to buy 2½ tons of pet food each year.”

Numbers 1-10

Numbers one through ten are written out.

Numbers 11 and Over

Numerals are used for numbers 11 and over.

“The team won ten games but lost 12.”

Percents

Except at the beginning of a sentence, numerals are always used in percents.

In nontechnical contexts, the word percent is generally used; in scientific and statistical copy, and on digital platforms like social media, the symbol % is more common.

Hyphenate the number and “percent” only when “percent” modifies the number.

“Students from Niger make up 1 percent of people on campus.”

“It took a year for the faculty to come clean about their 15-percent raises.”

“Giving to the scholarship fund increased by 20%.”

Phone Number Format

Use a period in phone numbers.

555.123.1234

1.800.123.1234