

## Editorial Style Guide

These guidelines are designed to help National English Honor Society (NEHS) members prepare copy for NEHS publications (print and electronic). They are intended to ensure consistency of style, and are based on the most current Modern Language Association [\*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers\*](#) as well as on organizational preference. In any circumstance where this guide does not provide enough information, members should defer to the most recent MLA guidelines. The following quick reference provides preferences and examples for frequently occurring inconsistencies.

### Abbreviations

As a general rule, abbreviations made up of lowercase letters should have a period after each letter, without spaces between letters: e.g., i.e. For abbreviations made up of predominately capital letters, use neither periods after letters nor spaces between letters: BC, NJ, US, DVD, PhD.

**Degrees:** Abbreviate whenever possible: MA, BA, MFA, MBA, PhD.  
Capitalize all majors and minors; use lowercase for general reference.  
She has a BA in English with minors in Creative Writing and Secondary Education.  
He has an MA in Mass Communication with an emphasis in electronic publishing.  
The position requires a bachelor's degree in a related field.

**Schools:** Spell out the names of high schools, colleges, and universities.  
He is a junior at Allentown High School.

**States:** Use the two-letter ZIP Code style to abbreviate states when used with a city or town.  
Note: Use two commas to set off the name of a state when it follows the name of a city.  
David Rodriguez, a junior at Batavia High School in Batavia, IL, is Chapter President.

**Time:** Use a.m. and p.m. (with periods) to designate time.  
The program is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Capitalization

**Awards:** Capitalize the full official name. Do not capitalize *award* when plural or standing alone.  
He won a Crafton Award.  
They announced the Outstanding Chapter and Outstanding Advisor awards.  
The awards recognize outstanding service at the local level.

**Board:** Capitalize all references to the National Advisory Council.  
The management of the Society is vested in the Advisory Council.  
A Board meeting is always scheduled immediately preceding or during the annual convention.  
All Board members are expected to attend; attendance is optional for non-Board members.

**Central Office:** Always capitalize *Central Office (CO)*.

**Chapter:** Capitalize *chapter* when part of an NEHS chapter's name.  
She is a member of the Quill and Lamp Chapter at Dwight D. Eisenhower High School.  
She is a member of the chapter at Dwight D. Eisenhower High School.

- Class:** Do not capitalize freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, undergraduate, or graduate.
- Common Reader:** Capitalize all references to a specific common reader once it has been selected.  
*Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, by Anne Tyler, is the Common Reader for 2017.  
 Next year's common reader will be announced in the spring.
- Constitution:** Always capitalize references to the NEHS Constitution and Bylaws.  
 Any member may initiate a proposed amendment or addition to the Constitution.
- Convention:** Capitalize when immediately preceded by Sigma Tau Delta, a date, or city.  
 (Note: Only the international event is referred to as a *convention*; regional events are referred to as *conferences*.)  
 The Sigma Tau Delta 2017 International Convention will be held in Louisville.  
 The theme of the Louisville Convention is *Recreation*.  
 The 2018 Annual Convention will be in Cincinnati.  
 The annual international convention is Sigma Tau Delta's signature event.
- Departments:** Capitalize department names.  
 The Department of English is located in the Arts & Sciences Building.  
 Applications are available in the English Department.
- Regions:** Capitalize *region* when part of an NEHS region's name (i.e., Eastern Region, Far Western Region, High Plains Region, Midwestern Region, Southern Region, and Southwestern Region).  
 The Southwestern Region held a conference in October 2015.  
 Each region is encouraged to hold a conference during the fall session of the academic year.  
 Join the Eastern Region's Facebook page to stay informed.  
 Join your region's Facebook page to stay informed.  
 Capitalize such words as *Midwesterner* and *Southerner* (referring to people in a region).  
 Several famous Southerners were featured in the article.  
 Welcome fellow Midwesterners!  
 Back home in Texas, he was reminded of how good it felt to be a Southwesterner.
- Scholarships:** Capitalize the full official name. Do not capitalize *scholarship* when plural or standing alone.  
 He won the NEHS Merit Scholarship.  
 They announced the winners of the William C. Johnson and National English Honor Society Director's scholarships.  
 NEHS offers a variety of scholarship opportunities.
- Seasons:** Do not capitalize unless part of a title.  
 The chapter hosts an induction ceremony during the fall semester.
- Society:** Capitalize when used in place of Sigma Tau Delta; do not capitalize a general reference that does not replace the title of our organization.  
 The official motto of the Society is Duty Goes with Honor.  
 The Society strongly encourages local chapters to plan and participate in social service activities.  
 Stay abreast of Society activities by reading NEHS*Xpress*, our monthly email newsletter.  
 We have developed into a society that increasingly interacts with the wider academic community.
- Titles/general:** When titles precede a name: use capitalization.  
 The discussion will be led by Professor Carl White.  
 When titles follow a name or stand alone: use lowercase.  
 Carl White, professor of English history, will lead the discussion.

**Titles/NEHS:** Always capitalize Advisory Council positions: President, Vice President/President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary/Treasurer, Historian, Regent, Student Advisor (SA); and the plurals: Officers, Regents, and Student Advisors.

Always capitalize NEHS Central Office (CO) positions: Director of the National English Honor Society, Business Office Manager, Director of Marketing and Technology, Web Facilitator.

Always capitalize the singular and plural forms of NEHS chapter positions: Chapter Advisor (and all variations, e.g., Faculty Advisor, Faculty Sponsor, Sponsor), Chapter Administrator, and chapter officer positions.

Lindsey L. Ward, Chapter Advisor of The Woodlands College Park High School's Cavalier English Honors Society Chapter, was the inaugural recipient of the John L. Manear Outstanding Advisor Award. Include a cover letter signed by the Chapter Advisor (or sent from the Advisor's email address). She is very involved in NEHS as President of her local Epsilon Omega Chapter.

## Comma

**In a series:** MLA style includes the use of the serial/Oxford comma before the conjunction. Use commas to separate words, phrases, and clauses in a series.

Members are eligible for a variety of Scholarships including the William C. Johnson, Sigma Tau Delta, and NEHS Merit scholarships.

**Publications:** Use a comma after title, followed by the author.

This year's Common Reader is *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, by Anne Tyler.

## Computer and Internet Terms

**One word:** online, email, website (lowercase)

**Two words:** web page (lowercase)

## Dates

**Punctuation:** Use two commas to set off the year when it follows the month and day.

The meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 5, 2017, has been cancelled.

Do not use a comma between month and year or season and year.

The January 2012 issue has been archived.

He graduated in spring 2016.

**Sequence:** Use month-day-year format.

Submissions must be postmarked by November 7, 2016.

## Graphics

**NEHS Identity:** Graphic standards, including [NEHS logo formats and guidelines](#), are posted on the website.

As the need arises to update chapter materials in print and on websites, we ask chapters to adopt and incorporate these graphic elements. Images are available in many formats. Instructions on appropriate typography and colors are also included.

## Money

- Use of figures: In general, use figures to express amounts of money.  
Tickets are \$7.50 each.  
You may spell out infrequent references to money if the amount can be written in three words or less (e.g., five dollars, ten thousand dollars).  
He was down to his last five dollars.
- Whole dollars: Do not add a decimal point and zeros for whole dollar amounts, unless listed in a series or if they are in a column format.  
Tickets are \$7.50 each or two for \$14.  
The committee suggested several pricing options:  
\$7.50, \$7.75, or \$8.00
- Under a dollar: For amounts under a dollar, use figures with the word *cents*.  
A small coffee is 99 cents.
- Large amounts: Large amounts of money may be expressed in both figures and words.  
The original cost of the building was \$4.5 million.

## Numbers

- Figure style: Spell out numbers that can be written in one or two words and represent other numbers by numerals. Always spell out numbers that begin a sentence.  
One, thirty-six, one hundred, fifteen hundred, 2 ½, 101, 137, 1,275.  
Twenty-two students were awarded scholarships this year.  
For infrequent use of numbers, you may spell out numbers if they can be written in one or two words (ten, ninety-nine, one hundred, six million).
- Related numbers: Express in the same style.  
He reported that 8 of 12 chapters were represented.
- Four-digit: Use a comma (\$3,000).
- Plurals: Do not use an apostrophe to form the plural of a number (1990s, temperatures in the 90s).

## Publication Titles

- Italics: Italicize the names of books, plays, poems published as books, pamphlets, newsletters, and periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and journals).
- Quotation marks: Use quotation marks for the titles of articles, essays, stories, and poems published within larger works.

## Sentence Spacing

- General rule: Use one space after the punctuation at the end of a sentence.

## National English Honor Society

- General reference: Spell out *National English Honor Society* on the first reference and then use acronym *NEHS* for all subsequent references.  
*Society* may also be used.
- International: Since NEHS is an ***international*** organization, when referring to events or activities use “Society level” rather than “national level.”

Publications: NEHS*Xpress*  
NEHS *Museletter*

## Word Preferences

Alumna: A female graduate from a particular school.  
Jane Smith is an alumna of Clarksville High School.

Alumni: The plural of alumna/alumnus.  
Jane Smith and Bill Jones are alumni of Clarksville High School.

Alumnus: A male graduate from a particular school.  
Bill Jones is an alumnus of Clarksville High School.

Non-Fiction: Always hyphenate *non-fiction*. Capitalize “Fiction” when “Non” is capitalized or in a heading.  
*This I Believe* is a popular creative non-fiction anthology.  
Non-Fiction texts may be examined in essays submitted to the Intellectual Freedom Challenge.

Theatre: Preferred variant of *theater* when referring to a live production, unless the preferred spelling of a specific venue is theater.  
There was a Broadway production playing at the local theatre.  
The Harris Theater for Music and Dance is located at the north end of Millennium Park in downtown Chicago.

T-shirt: Always capitalize the ‘T’.  
There are several T-shirts available for purchase at the event.