

## CCBC EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

CCBC's mission-centric communications are designed to promote the incredible value of a CCBC education: Providing accessible, affordable, high-quality education to all those who want to earn degrees and workplace certifications, transfer, build careers and enrich their lives.

Of primary importance are college communications that attract, enroll, engage and retain students, and those that build community and donor support.

To ensure clear, consistent, concise communications that engage our audiences and connect them in meaningful ways to CCBC's mission, it is important that all follow these editorial guidelines. They articulate our core mission, define our brand vision, highlight our key outreach messages and demonstrate proper usage of the college and college entity names, etc.

This is essentially the song sheet that ensures all CCBC brand champions are singing in harmony when it comes to promoting our college.

**College mission:** The Community College of Baltimore County transforms lives by providing an accessible, affordable and high-quality education that prepares students for transfer and career success, strengthens the regional workforce and enriches our community.

### Key brand messages

A CCBC education is:

- **An incredible value**  
CCBC offers quality, flexibility, convenience and support in higher education and workforce training at an affordable price.
- **Top-notch**  
CCBC's highly qualified and dedicated faculty teach small classes in state-of-the art facilities. Here they can work closely with students, giving them the best opportunity to learn.
- **Flexible**  
CCBC offers traditional degree options, transfer options and non-credit certifications for those seeking to launch a career, upgrade the one they already have, or simply enrich their lives.
- **Convenient**  
Days, nights, weekends and online, CCBC offers courses at three campuses, three extension centers and a variety of high schools and community centers.
- **Supportive**  
CCBC's faculty and staff work hard to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed. This includes providing the financial, academic and career-related support students need to reach their goals.

## CCBC-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### COLLEGE REFERENCES

Do not capitalize "the" as a part of the college name. "The" in the college name is only capitalized if at the beginning of a sentence.

*Nearly 80,000 students attend classes at the Community College of Baltimore County every year.*

*The Community College of Baltimore County is a top provider of workforce education.*

News releases:

First reference: Community College of Baltimore County

Second reference: CCBC

*Daily Post*, on the website and in other internal communications:

First reference: CCBC

Second reference: CCBC or “the college” (not capitalized)

### CAMPUS REFERENCES

- There is NO hyphen between CCBC and campus: always CCBC Essex, never CCBC-Essex,
- The three main campuses are CCBC Catonsville, CCBC Dundalk, CCBC Essex. The three extension centers are CCBC Hunt Valley, CCBC Owings Mills, CCBC Randallstown.
- Campus designation must always be included in event listings.

News releases:

First reference: Community College of Baltimore County, Catonsville

Second reference: CCBC Catonsville

**Note:** You may use “the Catonsville campus: (no capital for “campus”) if the flow is better for subsequent references. However, CCBC Catonsville is the preferred; never just “Catonsville.” There is no capitalization of “the” before campus names.

*Daily Post* and other internal communications:

First and second references: CCBC Catonsville, Catonsville campus (both acceptable)

### PRESIDENT REFERENCES

- “President” is capitalized as a title only when it precedes Dr. Kurtinitis’ name.

News releases:

First reference: Dr. Sandra Kurtinitis, president, Community College of Baltimore County, or

CCBC President Sandra Kurtinitis

Second reference: Dr. Kurtinitis or President Kurtinitis

*Daily Post* and other internal communications:

First reference: Dr. Sandra Kurtinitis, president, or President Sandra Kurtinitis

Second reference: Dr. Kurtinitis or the president (no caps)

### VICE PRESIDENT REFERENCES

- Only the area of the vice president’s leadership, not his or her title, is capitalized. A title is only capitalized if it precedes the person’s name.

News releases:

First reference: Richard Lilley, vice president of Enrollment and Student Services; Vice President Richard Lilley

Second reference: Lilley

*Daily Post* and other internal communications:

First reference: Richard Lilley, vice president of Enrollment and Student Services; Vice President Richard Lilley

Second reference: Lilley

### QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

CCBC follows Associated Press style in matters of capitalization, abbreviation, spelling, numerals and usage (exceptions are noted). All CCBC employees may access the online *AP Stylebook* at <http://www.apstylebook.com/ccbcmdu.edu/> from their campus computers. Featured on this site is a section covering CCBC-specific style for issues regarding spelling, hyphenation and usage.

For issues of spelling, hyphenation, punctuation or style not addressed in the *AP Stylebook*, defer to

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>.

### GENERAL RULES

- Use active rather than passive voice; i.e. “Kurtinitis presented the plan,” not “The plan was presented by Kurtinitis.”
- Use third person subjects; e.g., he, she, they; not we, you, I.  
**Exception:** Personal communications or memos, or marketing communications that are styled and targeted appropriately.

## CCBC

- When referring to the college as a whole, use “CCBC,” “the college,” or “college-wide.”
- Do not capitalize “college” when used in a second reference to refer to CCBC.
- Never use “college system,” “the system,” or “system-wide.”

## CAPITALIZATION, PUNCTUATION AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Capitalize program and department titles, but lowercase for the words “program” or “department.”  
*Horticulture program, Women’s program, Finance department, English department*
- Capitalize the words “office,” “division” and “department” only when they precede the name of the entity.  
*Office of Student Life, Bursar’s office*
- For athletics, capitalize CCBC Athletics and the names of teams: *Men’s Soccer, Women’s Soccer, Women’s Basketball*, etc., but lowercase “team,” as in *Men’s Soccer team*.
- Use only a single space after a period.
- In most cases, punctuation always goes inside quotation marks.
- Use commas to separate elements in a series, but no comma before the conjunction in a simple series.  
*The flag is red, white and blue. Students, faculty, staff and community members are invited.*
- Use AP style for state abbreviations; e.g., Penn., not PA, for Pennsylvania.
- Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The company will make good all the losses.* But: *There were considerations: expense, time and feasibility.*
- Use state abbreviation when a particular city or county is noted.  
*Owings Mills, Md., Baltimore County, Md.*
- Lowercase “state” in all “state of” constructions; e.g. the state of Maryland.
- Lowercase seasons when noting generic semesters; e.g., fall semester. Capitalize seasons when noting a specific semester, e.g., Fall 2017.
- U.S. when used as an adjective; spell out as United States when used as a noun.
- When quotation marks are needed within a headline, use single marks.
- An ellipsis consists of three periods. Treat it like a three-letter word: one space before it, one space after, no spaces between the periods.
- Put quotation marks around composition titles, including titles of books, movies, plays, poems, albums, songs, operas, radio and television programs, lectures, speeches, and works of art. Avoid underlines.
- Headlines for press releases, *Daily Post* articles, etc. should have capital letters only at the beginning of the sentence and for proper nouns. Do not capitalize each word in the headline; do not make headlines all caps.
- ACCUPLACER is always all caps. So is ZIP as in ZIP code.

## FORMER CAMPUS NAME REFERENCES

When identifying an individual who attended or was employed by one of CCBC’s founding colleges (prior to 1998 consolidation to CCBC):

*Dennis Lynn, a standout athlete at then-Essex Community College from 1964 to 1966*

*Martha Smith, former president of Dundalk Community College (now CCBC Dundalk)*

## NUMERALS

Refer to the AP Stylebook section on numerals for specific guidelines on using figures vs. words.

- Spell out numbers less than 10: one, five, nine. Use numerals above 10: 21, 100, 856. An exception to the rule is ages, when figures are always used.
- Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun. *A 5-year-old boy, but the boy is 5 years old. The boy, 5, has a sister, 10. The race is for 3-year-olds.*
- Use commas in noting figures that are four digits and more; e.g., 4,000 and \$4,000.
- Use the % sign when paired with a number, with no space. Do not spell out “percent.”
- Spell out ordinal numbers “first” through “ninth.” Use figures starting with 10<sup>th</sup>.
- In general, spell out numbers at the start of a sentence: *Forty years was a long time to wait. Fifteen to 20 cars were involved in the accident.* An exception is years: *1992 was a very good year.*
- For million, billions, trillions, use a figure-word combination 1 million people; \$2 billion, not one million/two billion.
- Use “more than,” not “over;” use “less than” or “fewer,” not “under.”  
*There were more than 500 people in the room. She had less than ten dollars in her wallet. He spoke for fewer than 15*

minutes.

## NAMES AND TITLES

- Always use last name in second and subsequent references to individuals; never first name.  
**Exception:** Personal communications or memos, or marketing communications that are styled and targeted appropriately.
- Formal titles such as president, dean, chairman, professor are capitalized and spelled out when they precede a name; lowercase elsewhere. *Dean Caroline Scott; Caroline Scott, dean of College Life*
- Use chair or chairperson, not chairman or chairwoman. Capitalize only when preceding a name. Do not capitalize as a casual, temporary position. *Stephen J. Nolan, Esq., chairperson of the CCBC Board of Trustees; Board of Trustees Chairman Stephen J. Nolan, Esq.; the event chair is Sheela Murthy.*
- Do not use Mr., Ms., Mrs. and other courtesy titles.
- Do not precede Jr. or Sr. with a comma. *Martin Luther King Jr.; Michael P. Ertel Sr.*
- 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.
- Do not use *Dr.* before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. Instead, when necessary or appropriate: *Cassandra Karoub, who has a doctorate in mathematics, was lead researcher.* The exception to this rule is using *Dr.* in references to Dr. Sandra Kurtinitis, CCBC president (see *President References*).

## ACADEMIC DEGREES

- Lowercase associate degree (no possessive), bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate.
- The abbreviations A.A., B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. have periods.
- When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: Sandra L. Kurtinitis, Ph.D.

## TIME, DATE, PLACE

- Follow this example for order of construction: The event will be held 1 p.m. Monday, Aug. 2 at CCBC Dundalk, Career Building, Room 111.  
**Note:** No comma between time and day.
- Use day of the week when it is an upcoming event; omit day of the week when referring to past event.  
*The conference will be held Monday, Feb. 26. The conference was held Feb. 26.*
- Use only cardinal numbers, never ordinal numbers, in dates.  
*The ceremony is set for Monday, April 11. **NOT:** The ceremony is set for Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>.*
- Do not use "on" before a date or day of the week unless its absence would lead to confusion.  
*The meeting will be held Monday. He will be inaugurated Oct. 1.*
- Use figures for all times, except for noon and midnight.  
*Use 3 p.m., not 3:00 p.m.; but use 3:30 p.m.*  
*Do not use "12" to precede "noon" or "midnight."*
- Use "before" not "prior to" when referring to timing of events.  
*There will be a brief meeting before lunch.*
- Use appropriate abbreviations for months of year when including specific date.  
*Feb. 4, 2011; but February 2011.*
- Abbreviate months according to AP style: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.  
*March, April, May, June and July are never abbreviated.*
- Do not abbreviate days of the week unless listed in a tabular format (i.e., within the course schedule).

## INTERNET

*The web, like email, is a subset of the internet. They are not synonymous and should not be used interchangeably.*

- Internet: lowercase "i" except at the beginning of a sentence.
- If an internet address falls at the end of a sentence, use a period. If an address breaks between lines, split it directly after a slash or a dot that is part of the address, without an inserted hyphen.
- Website: one word, lowercase "w" except at the beginning of a sentence.  
*Also: webcam, webcast, webmaster, webpage, webfeed, the web.*
- Online: one word, lowercase "o" except at the beginning of a sentence
- Email: one word, not hyphenated; lowercase "e" except at the beginning of a sentence.

Use a hyphen with other e- terms: e-book, e-business, e-commerce.

## GRADUATE/ALUMNI REFERENCES

- Use: A CCBC graduate; a CCBC Dundalk alumnus/alumna.
- The terms *alumnus* (s.) and *alumni* (pl.) for men, and *alumna* (s.) and *alumnae* (pl.) for women, are acceptable. If a gender-neutral term is desired, *alum* or *alums* is acceptable.
- Avoid using names of former separate colleges unless the reference is important to the context of the story

## ODDS, ENDS AND COMMON ERRORS

### Punctuation

- Insert only a single space after a period at the end of a sentence or following a colon.
- The period and comma always go inside the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.
- There is no hyphen between adverbs ending in -ly and the adjectives they modify: *A fully informed woman, an easily remembered rule.*
- Use a hyphen between adverbs and adjectives for adverbs that do not end in -ly when they precede a noun. *A well-known man, a full-time student. **Note:** The man was well known. The student attended college full time.*
- When using a dash within a sentence, use an em dash, not an en dash, and place a space on either side of the em dash. *Through her long reign, the queen and her family adapted — usually skillfully — to the changing taste of the time. He listed the qualities — intelligence, humor, conservatism, independence — that he liked in an executive.*

### Usage

- **African American.** Not hyphenated.
- **Afterward.** Not afterwards.
- **Amid.** Not *amidst*.
- **Among.** Not *amongst*.
- **Ampersand.** Use only when it is part of a company's formal name: *Baltimore & Ohio Railroad*. It should not be used as shorthand to replace "and."
- **Child care.** Two words, not hyphenated.
- **Compose, comprise, constitute.**
  - Compose means to create or put together: *The United States is composed of 50 states.*
  - Comprise means to contain or to include all: *The United States comprises 50 states.*
  - Constitute means to form or make up: *Fifty states constitute the United States.*
- **Continual, continuous.**
  - Continual means a steady repetition, over and over again.
  - Continuous means uninterrupted, steady, unbroken.
- **Daylong, lifelong, yearlong.** *-long* is a combining form with nouns meaning "for the duration of." One word, no hyphen. The exception to this rule is **semester-long**, which should be hyphenated.
- **Ensure, insure.** *Ensure* means to guarantee. *Insure* refers to insurance.
- **Flier, flyer.** *Flier* is the preferred term for an aviator or a handbill. *Flyer* is the proper name of some trains and buses. *She posted a flier with information about the picnic.*
- **For more information about.** Not *for more information on*.
- **\*-free.** This construction is always hyphenated: *smoke-free, tuition-free*.
- **Fundraising, fundraiser.** One word in all cases.
- **Health care.** Two words, not hyphenated.
- **i.e., e.g.**
  - i.e.: Abbreviation for the Latin "id est" or "that is to say" and is always followed by a comma.
  - e.g.: Meaning "for example," it is always followed by a comma.

- **It's, its.**
  - *It's* is a contraction for it is or it has: *It's up to you. It's been a long drive to the city.*
  - *Its* is the possessive form of the neuter pronoun: *CCBC is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.*
- **LGBTQ.** Acceptable in all references for *lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer and/or questioning.*
- **Longtime.** One word, no hyphen.
- **Long-standing.** Two words, hyphenated.
- **Over, more than.**
  - *Over* generally refers to spatial relationships: *The plane flew over the city.*
  - *More than* is preferred with numerals. *Their salaries went up more than \$20 a week.*
- **\*-ready.** This construction is always hyphenated: *job-ready, career-ready, classroom-ready.*
- **Student-athlete.** Two words, hyphenated. Also student-veterans.
- **Titled, entitled.**
  - *Titled* refers to the name of a movie, book, song, etc.: *The book was titled "War and Peace."*
  - *Entitled* means a right to do or have something: *She was entitled to a refund for the cancelled class.*
- **Toward.** Not *towards*.
- **Well-being.** Two words, hyphenated.
- **Workbook, workday, workforce, workout, workplace, worksheet, workstation, workweek.** One word in all cases.
- **Work-study.** Two words, hyphenated.
- **Year-round.** Two words, hyphenated.

### Gender-Neutral Language

- In general, use terms that can apply to any gender. Such language aims to treat people equally and is inclusive of people whose gender identity is not strictly male or female. For example: *search* instead of *manhunt*. *Police officer* instead of *policeman*. *Door attendant* instead of *doorman*.

***These guidelines were last updated October 2022.***

