

## **Agency Editorial Style Guide**

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## Purpose

The purpose of this editorial style guide is to help staff at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board or THECB) prepare materials for the agency's board, the Legislature, and other organizations with whom the agency collaborates. This guide is intended to help staff present a consistent editorial style across divisions. Some divisions, such as General Counsel, may produce documents that deviate from these guidelines, and specific style issues for some types of materials, such as correspondence, may not be covered. This guide is based primarily on the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook, but our agency sometimes departs from AP or other established style guides for context-driven or agency preference reasons. Therefore, the format guidelines noted in this document represent our agency's "house style."

Note that this guide covers only editorial guidelines. For guidance on logo use, colors, and other branding-related topics, visit the Agency Communications Sharepoint site and consult the "Branding Guidelines" document.

## Scope

### Associated Press (AP) Style

AP's preferred dictionary is [Merriam-Webster](#).

Comprehensive information about AP style is available with an account at: <https://www.apstylebook.com/>. Abbreviated information about AP style is available from:

- [The Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)
- The [AP Style Cheat Sheet](#) by CoSchedule

### Notable Exceptions to AP Style

This guide follows the Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) to format some report elements that AP style does not address or because agency preference departs from AP. Specifically, the agency adheres to APA for the following (covered in this guide):

- [Headings](#)
- [Titles of works](#)
- [In-text citations](#)
- [References](#)

**Footnotes** – Neither AP nor APA use footnotes. The THECB allows them in our reports, however, so see the [entry for footnotes](#) in the Quick Reference Guide for guidance on use and formatting.

**Tables, figures, etc.** - See the [Figures/Tables/Charts](#) entry for the agency's preferred formatting for headings and captions for charts, figures, graphs, and tables.

## General Guidelines

As with all style guides, sometimes there is reason to depart from the suggested style. The pages of this guide contain the preferred style for agency documents in most contexts. No style guide, however, can address every possible situation in writing the English language, so context reigns supreme. A style guide simply provides guidelines and consistency, not intractable rules. The main goal of any style guide is to create consistency within an organization's messages.

A good rule of thumb is to follow the style guidelines in this document, unless there is a clear and contextual reason not to follow them. For any items not found within these guidelines or reliable online sources, consistently apply reasonable and justifiable styles to the document. Finally, always spell check written materials.

## General Writing Tips

- When possible, **write short sentences**. They are easier to read and understand and are usually more concise. Reading comprehension rates dramatically increase with shorter sentences.
- When using an adverb before a verb phrase, place the **adverb first, if possible**, e.g., *dramatically decreased*. In some instances, however, the adverb may read better after the verb phrase.
- When writing about people in the abstract (as opposed to a specific person), **use plural construction, they/them/their**, to avoid potentially awkward or sexist language. They/them/their is acceptable as a gender-neutral substitution for he/she, him/her, and his/her when alternative wording is awkward or clumsy.
- Although ending sentences with prepositions is not the stringent rule it once was, agency house style is to **avoid ending sentences with a preposition**.
- In most cases, **use active (not passive) voice**. Passive voice often contains a helping verb (e.g., *is, was, were*) and a preposition such as *by*.

**EXAMPLES:** The rule was determined by the committee. (passive voice ✗)

The committee determined the rule. (active voice ✓)

- When possible, **avoid jargon**. Jargon is language that makes sense only to a group of people within a particular profession or industry. Ask yourself if your spouse, brother, or friend would know what you mean. That said, some specific, technical language may be needed or may be appropriate for reports geared toward small, specialized audiences. In that case, it's best to include definitions in the text when a term is introduced, in a footnote at the bottom of the page, or in a glossary at the end of the document.

**EXAMPLES:** project-based learning, stop outs, block scheduling

- Avoid placing a comma between two adjectives unless a pause would naturally occur between the two words, or word compounds, when reading.
- Whenever possible, **use plain language** that someone might use when speaking. For

example, "subsequent to" is seldom heard in conversation. A better word choice is "after." With [The Plain Writing Act of 2010](#), the federal government mandated that federal agencies use language that is clear and concise (i.e. "plain writing") so materials are understandable to the widest possible audience. It's good practice to apply that standard to state and municipal entities as well.

The section in this guide on [Wordy Phrases and Plain-Language Choices](#) contains tips about words or phrases that can be rewritten in plain language to enhance the readability of the agency's documents. Another resource for guidelines and examples is <https://plainlanguage.gov>.

- Use **one space** after periods.
- Avoid extraneous paragraph breaks by using Word's line spacing options. In general, set spacing for paragraphs to **0 points before** and **6 points after**.

## Quick Reference Guide

### Abbreviations and Acronyms

See [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) for agency-approved abbreviations and acronyms.

#### AVOID ALPHABET SOUP.

Avoid acronyms and spell out full names of institutions, programs, and other terms, unless doing so is unreasonable or impractical, like in charts and graphs when the name is long or when full names are long and used heavily throughout a document.

#### SPELL OUT THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF A TERM OR NAME.

For the first appearance of a term or name, use the full term/name followed by the acronym in parentheses. In subsequent references, the acronym can replace the term throughout the document.

**EXAMPLE:** The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is a state agency that works with higher education policies in Texas. Other state agencies often partner with the THECB.

#### ➤EXCEPTIONS:

If the first use is in an Executive Summary, spell out the term again when it first appears in the body of the document.

For space and readability, if the acronym first appears in a heading, and spelling out the term first would be too cumbersome, it's okay to use it in the heading without spelling it out first *as long as* the sentence immediately following spells out the full term and defines the acronym.

For the same reason, acronyms are also okay in memo titles or subject lines, email subject lines, etc., if the term is immediately defined with the full term in the body of the document. Use discretion as to the best format on a case-by-case basis.

**EXAMPLE:** SAP requirements

Schools require students to show satisfactory academic progress (SAP) to be eligible for financial aid.

#### ➤DON'T USE AN ACRONYM IF IT'S ONLY USED ONCE.

If an acronym is only used once in a document, spell out the full term without putting the abbreviation in parentheses after it, UNLESS readers are likely to be more familiar with the acronym than the full term (for example, FAFSA). In that case, it's okay to put the acronym in parentheses after the spelled-out term, even if the term isn't used again, for clarity.

PLURALIZE by adding a lowercase "s" to the end of an acronym (no apostrophe).

**EXAMPLE:** The program began in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. Data for FYs 2020 and 2021 show the COVID-19 pandemic affected many students.

USE THE CORRECT ARTICLE.

When an abbreviation is pronounced with a letter sound that requires *an*, use *an* instead of *a*. When the abbreviation is pronounced as a word, use the article that best fits.

**EXAMPLES:** Funding will cover an FTE for the program.

Students must fill out a FERPA release form to share their information with a third party.

BE CONSISTENT.

Use acronyms consistently throughout a document.

REFER TO THE AGENCY USING APPROVED SUBSTITUTIONS.

"Coordinating Board" and/or "THECB" can replace "Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board," but should be noted in parentheses on first use.

**EXAMPLE:** The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board or THECB) is a state agency that oversees higher education in Texas. Other state agencies often partner with the Coordinating Board. The THECB is responsible for many things.

REFER CONSISTENTLY TO THE STATE'S LONG-RANGE, HIGHER EDUCATION PLAN.

Refer to the Texas higher education strategic plan as *Building a Talent Strong Texas*, italicized.

NOTE: It is the state's plan, not the agency's. (Previous strategic plans: *60x30TX*, *Closing the Gaps*)

## **academic degrees**

For most uses, spell out and use lower case for general references to academic degrees:

- *associate degree* (no apostrophe s)
- *bachelor's degree*
- *master's degree*
- *doctor's degree*; *doctoral degree*; "pursuing a *doctorate*" (do not use "degree" after "doctorate")

For a specific degree, write out the type of degree (ex: Bachelor of Arts), except for PhD, and capitalize the full degree name, including the area of study:

- Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering
- Master of Arts in History
- Associate of Applied Science in Computer Programming
- PhD in Philosophy

Use abbreviations such as *BA*, *MA*, etc. only when you have many individuals or degrees to mention, and the preferred, spelled-out form would be cumbersome (for example, in a list or table). Per APA style, do not include periods in the abbreviations. Use abbreviations only after a full name, never after just a last name, and use commas to set off the degree:

- The panel included *Stephanie Sanchez, MA*; *Bill Taylor, PhD*; and *Karen Otumbe, LLD*.

See the entries for [Dr.](#) and [PhD](#) for guidance on how to use these titles/designations with names.

## ACT/SAT

Only use initials when referring to these exams. There is no need to introduce this acronym with a full name and the usual parentheses.

## Advanced Placement courses and exams

Spell out on first use; *AP classes* and *AP exams* are acceptable on second reference. The not-for-profit organization that administers AP exams and the SAT is the College Board.

## adviser/advisor

Per common use in higher education, agency preference is to use “advisor” when referring to academic counselors and “adviser” in other uses. However, either spelling is grammatically correct, so just be consistent within your document or materials. Some programs work with collaborators who prefer one spelling over the other; in those cases, use the spelling appropriate for your project/document.

**EXAMPLES:** *The student met with her academic advisor to discuss her degree plan.*

*He serves as an adviser to the committee.*

Agency job titles: *Grad TX Advisor, but Advise TX Adviser*

## African American

Always capitalize both words. Never hyphenate. Also, when discussing specific populations in reports, order the discussion alphabetically, e.g., African American, Asian, Hispanic, etc.

## after, once

Use *after* instead of *once* to indicate sequence.

**EXAMPLE:** *We will begin printing the report after we review it.*

## after-school

Insert a hyphen when this term is used as an adjective, e.g., *after-school programs*.

## a.m./p.m.

Lowercase, with periods

See [time](#).

## ➤armed forces

Per AP, when referring to individual branches of the military, capitalize the name of the service (*U.S. Army, the Navy, Texas National Guard*). But when referring to the collection of branches, only uppercase the country or state (*the U.S. armed forces*).

## associate degree

No apostrophe, e.g., *an associate degree, associate degrees*

## **because, since**

Use *because* when there is a cause-effect relationship; use *since* when what follows is not directly caused by other events in the sentence.

EXAMPLES: *She ran out of gas because she didn't stop at a gas station in time.*

*No one has been making coffee since the legislative session ended.*

## **billion**

See [million/billion/trillion](#).

## **Black**

Capitalize *Black* when used in the context of race. Lowercase *black* refers to a color, not a person.

See [race](#) for how to properly refer to race when necessary.

## **Board/board**

Only capitalize when referring to the full and proper name of a board. This applies to boards of directors, regents, trustees, etc.

**EXAMPLES:** *He was appointed to the University of Houston System Board of Regents.*

*The board adopted several new rules.*

**EXCEPTION:** The board of the THECB is often referred to as "the Board" in agency documents, such as board meeting materials. Please avoid this uppercase spelling in most documents; but if it must be used, introduce on first use as "the board of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Board)" and use the uppercase spelling *only* to refer to the board itself, not the agency.

## **career and college ready**

no hyphens

## **cellphone**

One word

## **chair**

Use the neutral word "chair" instead of "chairman" or "chairwoman."

Capitalize when used before a name (e.g., *Chair Fred Farias*). However, per AP, lowercase elsewhere (e.g., *Fred Farias, chair of the Committee on Academic and Workforce Success; the chair of the committee; The chair called the meeting to order.*).

## **college readiness**

no hyphen, even when used as an adjective, e.g., *college readiness skills*. Follow the same rule for "school readiness."

## **Committee/committee**

Capitalize only when referencing the full and proper name of a committee.

## ► Community College Finance Program

Capitalize when referring to the official program launched by the Legislature in 2023, which bases funding for community colleges on an outcomes-based model. However, use lowercase if using the term as a description, not as a reference to the specific program.

**EXAMPLE:** *The Texas Community College Finance Program uses performance-based metrics instead of the enrollment-based metrics of a traditional community college finance program.*

## congressman/congresswoman

Instead, use Rep. or Sen. before a legislative representative's name.

**EXCEPTION:** Use "The Honorable" before the name in memos and correspondence.

## corequisite

Do not hyphenate. This is a recent change to align agency style with industry standards and both the Texas Education Code and Texas Administrative Code.

## Council/council

Capitalize only when referencing a specific council, e.g., *the State Regional Council*.

## course titles

Capitalize only when referring to specific courses. For generic courses, the topic is lowercase, except for Language courses, which are always capitalized.

**EXAMPLES:** *History 110, Math for Non-Math Majors, a history course, an English course*

## coursework

One word

## courtesy titles

Refer to both men and women by first and last name, without courtesy titles (e.g., *Ms.*, *Mrs.*, *Mr.*), on first reference: i.e., Susan Smith or Robert Smith. Refer to both men and women by last name only, without courtesy titles, in subsequent references, e.g., "Smith stated . . ."

See entries for [Dr.](#) and [PhD.](#)

## data

Always a plural noun, takes a plural verb; e.g., *The data are misleading.*

## dates

ABBREVIATIONS FOR MONTHS: Abbreviate only the following months when either a full date or a month and day are used (e.g., Aug. 15, 2016; Aug. 15): *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.*, and *Dec.* Always spell out the other months.

SPELL OUT MONTHS WHEN THEY ARE USED ALONE OR ONLY WITH A YEAR.

**EXAMPLE:** *The hottest month on record is August 2011.*

USE ARABIC FIGURES ONLY. Do not use *st*, *th*, *rd*, or *nd* after dates.

**EXAMPLE:** *The holiday party will take place on Dec. 18.*

USE A COMMA TO SET OFF DATES THAT INCLUDE A MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR.

**EXAMPLE:** *The hottest day on record is Aug. 21, 2011, according to the National Weather Service.*

USE A HYPHEN (NOT A DASH), NO SPACES BEFORE OR AFTER, IN NUMERIC DATE RANGES.

**EXAMPLE:** *9/01/16-8/31/17; 2014-2016; 2017-18*

### **decision-maker/decision-making**

Hyphenate both instances.

### **Department/department**

Use lowercase, except when this word is part of a proper noun, e.g., *Department of Justice*, *the department listed in the budget*. Do not abbreviate.

When referring to a person's title, we follow APA, which capitalizes the full name of the department: *He's the Dean of the Department of History at UTSA*. (Note that agency style also capitalizes the person's official title when the full title is used.)

### **Dr.**

AP only allows the use of *Dr.* before the name of a person with a medical degree, but our agency also allows it on first reference before the name of a person with a doctorate. After first use, though, use last name only. Do not use for honorary doctorates.

For those with a medical degree, *MD* **can** be included as well after the name on first reference if it's there's a particular reason to note that the person's degree is an MD, not a doctorate. This is not recommended/necessary for most occasions, though.

**EXAMPLE:** *Dr. John Smith, MD, was at the conference. However, Smith did not present a paper.*

For those with a doctorate:

- If *Dr.* is used on first reference, state their specialty/degree in first or second reference unless context makes it clear the person is not a medical doctor.
- Avoid using *PhD* after a name unless context requires individuals to be identified by degree (for example, in the Higher EDge program, which lists doctoral degrees of all speakers after their names). If used, use on first reference only. (Flexibility granted to commissioner and board chair.)
- Do not use both *Dr.* and *PhD* with a name.

**EXAMPLES:** Dr. Jane Williams; Jane Williams, PhD ✓  
Dr. Jane Williams, PhD ✗

See [courtesy titles](#), [PhD](#), and [professional designations](#).

### **dual credit, dual enrollment**

No hyphen, even when used as a modifier, e.g., *dual credit courses*

### **dropout/drop out**

*dropout* when used as a noun; *drop out*, as a verb;

The agency often uses the term *stopout* in place of *dropout* to indicate a student who has (possibly temporarily) withdrawn from higher education.

### **email**

One word, no hyphen

### **ensure/insure/assure**

- *Ensure* means to guarantee.
- *Insure* means to establish a contract for some type of insurance.
- *Assure* means to make sure or give confidence.

**EXAMPLE:** I need to *insure* my car to *ensure* I am covered in case of an accident. The agent *assures* me that it's affordable.

### **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**

All uppercase, per the US Department of Education. This term is replaced by "Student Aid Index" (SAI) as of the 2024-25 award year.

### **faculty**

Collective noun; takes a singular verb

### **fall**

See [\*seasons\*](#).

### **federal**

Do not capitalize this term unless it is part of a proper noun.

### **Federal Pell Grant (or Pell Grant)**

Capitalize, per the Department of Ed. The program that created the grant is the Federal Pell Grant Program.

### **fewer/less**

Use *fewer* for things that can be counted and *less* for things measured or found in bulk.

**EXAMPLE:** *People with fewer skills may earn less money.*

### **Field of Study/field of study**

Capitalize when referring to our Field of Study Curriculum (FOSC) transfer resource or the name of a specific FOS. Lowercase if you're using the term generically.

**EXAMPLE:** *His field of study is chemistry. He should check the Chemistry Field of Study Curriculum to make sure he takes courses that will transfer.*

## **Fiscal Year/fiscal year**

Capitalize this term and its abbreviation (FY) only when it's used with a specific year, e.g., *Fiscal Year 2013*, *FY 2012*, *this fiscal year*. As with any acronym, spell out on first use.

To pluralize the abbreviation, add a lowercase "s": FYs 2018 and 2019.

For a range, use a hyphen with no spaces between years and "Fiscal Years" or "FYs" before the first term only: *FYs 2017-2019* or *Fiscal Years 2017-19*. You can use either four numbers or two for the second year in the range, just be consistent within a document.

## **GED**

This acronym is the trademarked abbreviation for *General Educational Development* tests, so no need to spell out on first use. Use as an adjective, not a noun, whenever possible. If the acronym must be used as a noun, it must be followed by the trademark symbol (e.g., GED™).

EXAMPLE: *Students earn GED diplomas or certificates, not GEDs™.*

## **General Appropriations Act/General Appropriations Act Riders**

See [Appendix C](#) on how to cite.

## **governor**

Only capitalize this title when it precedes a name (e.g., *Governor Abbott*) or is part of the full and proper name of the agency (e.g., *Office of the Governor*). To abbreviate, use *Gov.* and capitalize. Lowercase and spell out if it does not precede a name, e.g. *The governor listed six conditions.*

## **GPA**

Acceptable in all references for *grade-point average*. No need to spell out on first use.

## **grades**

Can use figures for all grades when referring to a grade number: *2nd grade*, *10th grade*, *grade 5*. (This is a departure from AP, which requires grades 1-9 to be spelled out.)

**EXCEPTION:** Spell out the grade number for grades under 10 when referring to a person as "grader": *fourth grader*, *10th grader*. No hyphen is necessary unless needed for clarity, such as when combined with an ordinal number: *She is the 10th third-grader to join the contest.*

**EXAMPLES:** *first grader*, *10th grader*; *1st grade student*, *11th grade classes*; *She's the sixth fourth-grader to win*; *Testing will include students in grades 1-10.*

See the [K-12/pre-K](#) and [prekindergarten](#) entries for guidance on those grades.

## graduate (as a verb)

Correctly used in active voice: *She graduated from college*. Passive voice is technically correct but not preferable (e.g., *He was graduated from college*). If you use passive voice, do not drop the word "from": *John Adams graduated from Harvard*; not *John Adams graduated Harvard*.

## HBCU

Per AP, capitalize as "historically Black colleges and universities." Use the full term on first use; *HBCUs* is acceptable on second reference and in headlines.

*HBCU* is acceptable as a modifier on second reference: *HBCU students*. Refer to an individual school, though, as *a historically Black college* or *a historically Black university*, not *an HBCU*.

**EXAMPLES:** *Many historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have seen enrollment increases. HBCU students report high satisfaction. Prairie View A&M University is a historically Black university.*

## health care/healthcare

We depart somewhat from AP on this term. The AP always spells this term with two words, no hyphen, unless the one-word spelling is part of a proper name (e.g. Affordable Healthcare Act). However, the one-word spelling has become common when referring to the medical system/industry as opposed to individual actions that a provider takes to assist a patient.

So, in line with common usage, it is acceptable at our agency to refer to the medical system/industry as one word (usually used as an adjective), and the individual services a provider delivers to patients as two words (a noun).

**EXAMPLE:** *The healthcare system doesn't always support patients who need to receive health care services at home.*

## high school

Do not hyphenate, even when used as a modifier, e.g., *high school student*, *high school teacher*, etc.

## Hispanic

Identify populations with Spanish origins using this term, always capitalized.

Avoid using Latino/a/x, Chicano/a, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc. When discussing specific populations in reports, order the discussion alphabetically, e.g. African American, Asian, Hispanic, etc.

## historic/historical

Use *historic* to refer to an important event; use *historical* to refer to any occurrence or materials from the past.

**EXAMPLES:** *The Wright brothers' historic flight took place in North Carolina. The club holds 10 years of historical records about its quarterly meetings.*

## House Bill

Capitalize this term and use HB, no periods, as the acronym. See [Appendix C](#) re: citing bills.

## House of Representatives

Capitalize this term when referring to a specific legislative body, e.g., *Texas House of Representatives*; also capitalize shortened versions, e.g., *the Texas House*, *the House*.

## Houston Endowment

Capitalize; never insert "The" before this proper noun.

## internet/intranet

Do not capitalize, except at the beginning of sentences.

## italics

Books, movies, reference materials, journals, manuals, and the long-range higher education plan for Texas should be italicized in reports and materials (a departure from AP style).

### EXAMPLES:

- *The Texas Higher Education Almanac; Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual*
- *Building a Talent Strong Texas*
- *The Chronicle of Higher Education; Texas Register*

Note: Titles of agency reports are not italicized. See [titles of reports, manuals, media, etc.](#)

## Job titles

AP capitalizes job titles only when they appear before a name (*Dean John Smith*), but it is acceptable at our agency to capitalize full, official titles (*Smith is the Dean of the College of Education*). This does not apply to general job descriptions (*Smith is the dean of the department*) or volunteer appointments like board positions (chair, secretary, etc.).

Do not capitalize a job title without a name (*The commissioner issued a memo*), unless it is the full, official title (*The Commissioner of Higher Education issued a statement*).

See [courtesy titles](#), [PhD](#), and [Dr.](#)

## Jr./Sr.

Only use the abbreviations for junior/senior when the full name appears; do not use a comma before the abbreviation, e.g., *Martin Luther King Jr.*

## K-12/pre-K

K-12 is the abbreviation for kindergarten through 12th grade. To include pre-K, you can abbreviate as "pre-K-12," but if it won't be written a lot in a document, "pre-K through 12th grade" is preferable. Use the same structure if you're abbreviating a range that includes kindergarten through any grade, 1-12 (i.e. "K-6").

## legislative titles

Use *Rep.* or *Sen.* before a name; only capitalize formal titles such as assemblyman, assemblywoman, lieutenant governor, when they appear before a name, e.g., *Assemblywoman Harris*.

See [congressman/congresswoman](#).

## Legislature

Capitalize this term when it refers to a specific legislature, whether or not the state name is included, except in plural instances and when used generically.

### EXAMPLES:

- *the Texas Legislature*
- *The Legislature met to discuss HB 5.*
- *The Florida and Washington legislatures voted to extend baccalaureate programs at community colleges.*
- *Many state legislatures meet annually.*

## lieutenant governor/Lt. Gov.

Only capitalize this title when it precedes a name. Use lowercase and spell it out if it does not precede a name. To abbreviate, use *Lt. Gov.* and always capitalize the abbreviation.

## like, as

Use *like* as a preposition (must have a noun object); use *as* to begin clauses.

**EXAMPLES:** *The verdict came down like a hammer.*

*The recommendations will be carried out as decided by the committee.*

## lists (seriation)

See [Lists \(Seriation\)](#) in the Punctuation section.

## Login/logon/logoff

When using these words as nouns, they are one word (e.g., *The login for the site is at the top of the page*); when using them as verbs, they are two words (e.g., *log in, log on, log off*).

## -long

When using *-long* as a suffix with semester, month, or year, no hyphen is needed (e.g., *monthlong, yearlong, semesterlong*).

## -ly

No hyphen is needed between words ending in *-ly* and the adjectives they modify, e.g., *federally funded grant*.

## matriculate

Use *enroll* instead, per plain-language standards. If *matriculate* is used to indicate a meaning distinct from *enroll*, you can use *matriculate*, but define it for the reader.

## mid-

Do not hyphenate in general (e.g., *midsemester*, *midterm*), unless the word that follows is capitalized (e.g., *mid-October*).

## million/billion/trillion

- Use figures, including 1-9, with *million*, *billion*, and *trillion*, e.g., \$6 *billion*.
- In a range, use the term after both figures, e.g., \$5 *million to \$25 million*.
- No hyphen is needed when one of these words follows a figure, e.g., \$300 *billion budget*.

## mission statement

Capitalize this term when referencing an institution's specific mission statement, but not when the term is used generically, e.g. *the mission statements of colleges*, *Victoria College's Mission Statement*.

THECB uses a "purpose statement" instead of a mission statement. See [THECB Purpose Statement](#).

## months

ABBREVIATIONS FOR MONTHS: Abbreviate only the following months when using a full date or a month and day: *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.*, and *Dec.* Always spell out the other months.

**EXAMPLES:** *Aug. 15, 2016; Oct. 15; March 17, 2020; April 2019*

SPELL OUT MONTHS WHEN THEY ARE USED ALONE or with a year only: *The hottest month on record is August 2011. It's always cold in January.*

Also see [dates](#).

## Mr./Ms./Mrs.

Avoid using courtesy titles. Simply write the person's name, i.e. "Robert Valdez" or "Kathy Smith." After the first use of a person's full name, use only the last name in subsequent uses, i.e. "Valdez" or "Smith." Avoid using *Ph.D.* after a name.

See [courtesy titles](#), [Dr.](#), and [PhD](#).

## non-credit

Always hyphenate.

## ➤ non-degree

Always hyphenate. This is a departure from AP, which uses no hyphen when the word stands on its own but uses a hyphen if additional words are added to turn it into a compound modifier, such as "non-degree-seeking." For consistency, we use the hyphen in all uses.

## nonprofit

Never hyphenate. (However, hyphenate *for-profit* and *not-for-profit*.)

## **nontraditional**

Never hyphenate.

## **nontransferable**

Never hyphenate.

## **numbers**

NUMBERS ONE THROUGH NINE: spell out, except when they:

- precede the word "percentage" or are used with the % sign: 2% or 2 *percentage points*
- denote a sequence: *Page 2; Chapter 6; They must submit reports in Years 1 and 3; They were out of sizes 4 and 5; Rooms 3 and 4; Game 1, but best of seven*
- are part of an address or highway designation: *8 Congress Avenue; Loop 1*
- denote age, e.g., *6-year-old girl* or *The girl is 6 years old.*
- designate a political district, e.g., *District 5, 8th Precinct*
- reference monetary units, e.g., *5 cents, \$3 million*
- are part of a ratio: *3 out of 4; 2 in 5; The ratio was 2-to-1; The ratio was 1:1.5.*

COMPARING NUMBERS. If numbers below 10 are being compared with numbers 10 and above, use figures/numerals for both.

**EXAMPLE:** *She provided 7 responses, compared with the overall average of 10.*

AT THE BEGINNING OF A SENTENCE. Avoid beginning a sentence with a number, but if you must do so, spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence unless the number is a year.

**EXAMPLES:** *1995 was an important year for technical advances.*  
*Two hundred students graduated this semester.*

See [a.m./p.m.](#), [dates](#), [grades](#), [percentages](#), [million/billion/trillion](#), [time zones](#), and [years](#).

## **off-site**

Always hyphenate.

## **ongoing**

Never hyphenate.

## **on-site**

Always hyphenate, per AP.

## **Pell Grant (or Federal Pell Grant)**

Capitalize, per the Department of Ed. The program that created the grant is the Federal Pell Grant Program.

## **percentages**

Use numerals for percentages and use the % sign when paired with a numeral (e.g. 1% or 15%, not *one percent* or *15 percent*), unless it's the start of a sentence, in which case both the number and "percent" are spelled out. This is a change per AP in 2019 from previous

guidance to spell out “percent” in text and only use the % sign in parentheses or in tables, etc.

**EXAMPLES:** *Just 5% of students are in AP classes.*

*Twenty-two percent of students missed class on Monday.*

For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: *Tuition increased 0.65%.*

Use “percentage,” rather than “percent,” when not paired with a number: *The percentage of people who graduated college increased in 2018.* Be careful not to confuse percent with percentage point. For example, a change from 10% to 13% is a rise of 3 percentage points, but is not equal to a 3% change; rather, it’s a 30% increase.

## **PhD**

As a general rule, avoid using *PhD* after a name unless context requires individuals to be identified by degree (flexibility granted to the commissioner and board chair). If used, use on first reference only. Thereafter, use only the individual’s last name. Do not use periods.

The agency does allow *Dr.* to be used before a name on first use to indicate someone has a doctorate. However, to avoid confusion that the person is a medical doctor, state the person’s specialty in first or second reference unless context makes it clear the person is not a medical doctor. If referring to a degree, capitalize and punctuate it as shown under [academic degrees](#).

See [Dr.](#)

## **policymaker/policymaking**

Never hyphenate.

## **postdoc**

Acceptable abbreviation for “postdoctoral” used as an adjective (spell out on first use and define the abbreviation). Avoid using as a noun for a postdoctoral student/scholar in most uses, but okay if it would be cumbersome to write out the full term multiple times in a document (define the abbreviation on first use, then spell as one word, no hyphen).

## **postgraduate, postsecondary**

One word

## **prearrange**

Most words that follow *pre* and begin with a vowel are hyphenated, e.g., *pre-enrolled*; however, *prearrange* is one word.

## **prekindergarten/pre-K**

One word; when abbreviated, use a hyphen and an uppercase K. To include pre-K in the K-12 grade range, the abbreviation is “pre-K-12” (which is a little hard to read, so “pre-K through 12th grade” is preferable if it will not be written a lot in a document).

## **prerequisite**

Never hyphenate.

## preschool

Never hyphenate.

## president/President

Capitalize only when this word is used with a name as part of a formal title, e.g., *University of XX President Martha Perez*. Otherwise, lowercase: *She is the president of the university*.

## presiding officer

Always use lowercase.

## problem-solving

Always hyphenate.

## professional designations

In most cases, with flexibility granted to the commissioner and board chair, the agency follows AP and does not include professional designations after names (e.g., CPA, PE, LCSW, etc.).

See [courtesy titles](#), [PhD](#), and [Dr.](#)

## race

- Following APA guidance, capitalize the names of racial and ethnic groups and do not use hyphens, even when used as modifiers.

**EXAMPLE OF GROUPS:** *African American, Asian, White, Native American, Hispanic, etc.*

**EXAMPLE OF USE:** *...an increasing number of African American students.*

- Use race only in reference to groups or populations, not to individuals.
- When discussing specific populations in reports, order the discussion alphabetically, e.g., African American, Asian, Hispanic, etc.

## SAT/ACT

Only use initials when referring to these exams. There is no need to introduce these acronyms with a full name and the usual parentheses.

## SCH/semester credit hour

*SCH* is singular; it's an abbreviation for *semester credit hour*. To indicate plural semester credit hours, write as *SCHs*.

## seasons

Do not capitalize the seasons unless they appear in a formal name or title, e.g., *fall 2014*, *spring semester*, *the 2022 Winter Olympics*.

## Section (in the context of Texas Administrative or Education Code)

When referring to specific legislation, capitalize and spell out the word *Section* (avoid using the symbol § often used in legal texts).

See [Appendix C](#) for how to cite statute.

## Senate

Always capitalize references to legislative bodies, whether the name of the state is used or not.

**EXAMPLE:** *The Senate will vote on the bill tomorrow.*

## Senate Bill

Capitalize this term and use SB, no periods, as the acronym. As with all acronyms, spell out on first use.

See [Appendix C](#) for how to cite bills.

## shall, will

When possible, avoid using *shall* except in legal documents or contexts, since it's rarely used in plain-spoken English. If it must be used, use *shall* to express determination, e.g., *we shall overcome*, not *they shall hold a meeting*. In the latter instance, use *will*.

WILL IS PREFERRED BY THE THECB IN FIRST-PERSON CONSTRUCTIONS (*I, we*): *We will hold a meeting.*

WILL IS PREFERRED FOR SECOND- AND THIRD-PERSON CONSTRUCTIONS (*you, he, she, they*) that do not emphasize determination: *You will like it. They will convene in two weeks.*

## should, would

It is often best to avoid *should* because it may carry a negative connotation that implies, "You must do this!" Use it sparingly and only with the appropriate audiences.

WHEN USED, *SHOULD* EXPRESSES AN OBLIGATION.

EXAMPLE: *We should help students apply to college.*

WOULD EXPRESSES A CUSTOMARY ACTION.

**EXAMPLE:** *In the spring, we would spend hours discussing goals for the fall.*

## since/because

Use *because* when there is a cause-and-effect relationship; use *since* when what follows is not directly caused by other events in the sentence and/or to denote a time relationship.

**EXAMPLES:** *She ran out of gas because she didn't stop at a gas station in time.*  
*No one is making coffee since the legislative session ended.*

## Social Security number (SSN)

Social Security is the proper name of the program and is capitalized, but "number" is lowercase.

## spring

See [seasons](#).

## staff

singular noun; takes a singular verb, e.g., *The THECB staff enjoys doughnuts.*

**state (of Texas)**

Lowercase in all instances, including "state of" constructions, e.g., *state of Texas*, *the state's plan*.

**statute**

See [Appendix C](#) for how to cite statute.

**STEM**

Acceptable on first reference for *science, technology, engineering, and math*, but spell out the full phrase shortly thereafter, if possible.

**stopout/stop out**

Write as one word, *stopout*, when used as a noun; and two words, *stop out*, when used as a verb. The agency often uses the term *stopout* in place of *dropout* to indicate a student who has (possibly temporarily) withdrawn from higher education.

**Student Aid Index**

All uppercase, per the US Department of Education. This term replaces "Expected Family Contribution" (EFC) as of the 2024-25 award year.

**subcommittee/Subcommittee**

No hyphen.

LOWERCASE WHEN PART OF ANOTHER committee, e.g., *the ways and means subcommittee of the Committee on Public Accountability*.

CAPITALIZE WHEN A SUBCOMMITTEE HAS ITS OWN PROPER NAME, e.g., *the Senate Subcommittee on Transportation*.

**summer**

See [seasons](#).

**superscript**

Generally, do not use *st*, *nd*, *rd*, or *th* after numbers (**EXCEPTIONS**: *83rd Legislature*, *10th grade*). When used, do not use superscript.

See [dates](#).

**teacher**

One word for *schoolteacher*; others are three words without hyphens: *grade school teacher*, *high school teacher*.

**telephone numbers**

Use this format: 512-427-0000, ext. 2

## ► Texas Administrative Code (TAC)

Rules enacted by state agencies.

See [Citing Code](#) for how to cite statute.

## ► Texas Education Code (TEC)

Statutes enacted by the Texas Legislature.

See [Citing Statute](#) for how to cite statute.

### Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board/THECB/Coordinating Board

When referring to the agency, use the full agency name on first use, and in parentheses, put the abbreviation (Coordinating Board) or acronym (THECB) that will be used from that point forward, e.g., "Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board)."

Subsequent references may use either the full name or the abbreviation/acronym contained in the parentheses but be consistent. Do not use "CB" as an acronym.

TO REFER THE BOARD MEMBERS OF THE AGENCY: refer to them as "the board members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board" or "the board of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board." Avoid using uppercase "Board" as an abbreviation for the board, but if it must be used, introduce on first use as "the board of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Board)" and use the uppercase spelling *only* to refer to the board itself, not the agency.

IF "COORDINATING BOARD" IS USED EXTENSIVELY THROUGHOUT A DOCUMENT as an abbreviation, it should only refer to the agency and not the presiding board.

USING "THE" BEFORE THE ACRONYM IS NOT REQUIRED but is acceptable. **Do not insert (or remove)** "the" before this acronym in language crafted by the agency's legal team.

### THECB Purpose Statement (as of May 2024)

Our purpose is to strengthen Texas through higher education. By making higher education accessible to a wide range of people, we can ensure Texas remains one of the world's most innovative, valuable educational systems. By bringing together data, policymakers, and institutions, we can inform sensible policies that make a difference and make education beyond high school available to every person in our state. When we do that, we will improve lives, communities, and our shared economy.

### time

Per AP style, format times as 9 a.m., 10 p.m., 5:30 p.m. (Exception: Some documents that list times for webinars, meetings, etc., may include the minutes in all times for additional clarity: 9:00 a.m.)

If both times are in the same part of day (morning or afternoon), include the a.m./p.m. to the second time only: 1-2 p.m.

For ranges, preference is to use an en-dash instead of hyphen: 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

## **time zones**

When it's necessary to include the time zone after the time, use the abbreviation including "S" for Standard Time or "D" for Daylight time, such as CST (for Central Standard Time), CDT (for Central Daylight Time), etc. (e.g., *noon CST, 9 a.m. CDT*).

## **titles of reports, manuals, media, etc.**

The following guidelines apply only to agency reports and materials and depart from AP style:

TITLES OF MANUALS, JOURNALS, and PRINT MEDIA OUTLETS should be capitalized and italicized, e.g., the *Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual* (ACGM), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. Note that acronyms for such titles are not italicized.

TITLES OF AGENCY REPORTS should be capitalized, but NOT italicized, and set off within quotations when referred to in a report, e.g., "Autism Grant Program: Annual Progress Report."

**EXCEPTION:** The state's higher education strategic plan, *Building a Talent Strong Texas*, should always be italicized and should never be inside quotation marks.

See [\*italics\*](#) for other exceptions.

## **toward**

The preferred spelling is *toward* instead of *towards*.

## **unique**

Means "one-of-a-kind"; avoid writing "most unique," "somewhat unique," etc.

## **underway**

One word. AP changed its guidance in 2013 to accept the one-word spelling in all uses.

## **U.S.**

Use periods when abbreviated in text.

## **vice chair**

Do not hyphenate.

Use the neutral "vice chair" instead of "vice chairman," "vice chairwoman," or "vice chairperson."

Capitalize when used before a name (e.g., Vice Chair John Smith). However, per AP, lowercase elsewhere (e.g., "John Smith, vice chair of the Committee on Academic and Workforce Success"; "the vice chair of the committee"; "The vice chair called the meeting to order.").

## **webpage**

Lowercase, one word, as of AP's 2016 update

**website**

Lowercase, one word

**well-being**

Always hyphenate.

**White/white**

Capitalize *white* when used in the context of race. The lowercase word *white* refers to a color, not people. Note that this is a departure from AP style, instead aligning with APA style to capitalize all races/ethnicities.

See [race](#) for how to properly refer to race when necessary.

**well-informed**

Always hyphenate.

**winter**

See [seasons](#).

**work-study**

Always hyphenate.

**years**

BEGINNING A SENTENCE WITH A YEAR IS ACCEPTABLE. This is an exception by AP to the rule of spelling out numbers at the start of a sentence.

WHEN A RANGE OF YEARS IS WRITTEN, and the first two years of the ending year are the same as the first two of the beginning year, the first two numerals of the ending year *may* be omitted, e.g., 2014-15, but it is not a requirement. Just be consistent. If you start by using full years (2014-2015), use full years throughout; if you start with the two-number construction (2014-15), use that throughout.

## Punctuation

### Apostrophes

FOR PLURAL NOUNS, add only the apostrophe to show possession: *universities' faculty, students' completions*

FOR SINGULAR PROPER NOUNS ENDING IN THE LETTER S, add an apostrophe and another s to show possession: *Silas's college, Texas's institutions of higher education*. (Note: This is a departure from AP style but requested by the commissioner.)

TO MAKE A LOWERCASE SINGLE LETTER PLURAL, use an apostrophe: *Mind your p's and q's*.

### Bullets

See [Lists \(Seriation\)](#).

### Capitalization

Capitalize **common nouns** that follow proper nouns only when they're part of a full name for a place, person, or thing. This applies for plural uses as well.

**EXAMPLES:** *Lady Bird Lake is actually the Colorado River, not an actual lake.*  
*The Democratic and Republican Parties could not reach a compromise, but the parties will keep working toward a solution.*

Other examples of capitalization are addressed throughout the guide for specific uses (i.e. [academic degrees](#), [race](#) entries, legislative entries, title entries, etc.).

### Colons

USE A COLON BETWEEN A GRAMMATICALLY COMPLETE introductory clause (one that stands alone as a sentence) and a final phrase or clause that illustrates, extends, or amplifies the preceding thought.

ONLY ONE SPACE IS needed after a colon.

ONLY CAPITALIZE THE FIRST WORD after a colon if it begins a complete sentence or is a proper noun.

**EXAMPLES:** *The survey covered three topics: participation, cost, and satisfaction.*  
*The researchers agreed on the result: Informed participants performed better than uninformed participants.*

FOR LISTS, precede any vertical bulleted or numbered list with a colon.

### Commas

BETWEEN ELEMENTS IN A SERIES of three or more items, use a comma between each item, including the final element before the "and" (known as the Oxford or serial comma; this is a departure from AP style).

EXAMPLE: *The height, width, and depth of the cabinet had to be measured accurately.*

TO SEPARATE TWO INDEPENDENT CLAUSES (complete sentences) JOINED BY A CONJUNCTION (e.g., *and*, *or*, *but*), use a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** *Bookcases covered every wall of the library, and rare books were kept in a special climate-controlled room.*

BETWEEN AN INDEPENDENT CLAUSE (complete sentence) AND DEPENDENT CLAUSE (an incomplete sentence that cannot stand alone), DO NOT use a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** *The committee approved the minutes and discussed the first item on the agenda.*

AFTER DATES WITH YEARS, use a comma; otherwise, DO NOT use a comma.

**EXAMPLES:** *April 18, 2008, was the correct date. April 1992 was the correct month.*

AFTER A PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE AT THE BEGINNING OF A SENTENCE, use a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** *In the meeting, a presenter discussed data and completion rates.*

AFTER A CITY AND STATE, use a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** *The meeting was held in Austin, Texas, at the Sheraton Hotel.*

TO SEPARATE PARTS OF MEASUREMENT, DO NOT use a comma.

**EXAMPLE:** *The child is 8 years 2 months old. (But better to say: The child is 8 years and 2 months old.)*

TO SET OFF A NONESSENTIAL OR NONRESTRICTIVE CLAUSE, use a comma; this type of clause embellishes a sentence by providing more information but if removed, leaves the grammatical structure and meaning of a sentence intact.

**EXAMPLE:** *Switch A, a black knob on the panel, controlled the recording device. (The clause "a black knob on the panel" is nonessential.)*

FOR AN ESSENTIAL, OR RESTRICTIVE CLAUSE, DO NOT use a comma; this type of clause limits or defines the material it modifies. Removal of such a clause from a sentence would alter the intended meaning.

**EXAMPLE:** *The switch that turns off the recording device also controls the light.*

WITH "THEN" VERSUS "AND THEN": When *then* is used instead of *and then*, a comma usually precedes the adverb. After *and then*, no comma is needed.

**EXAMPLES:** *The students finished the test, then ran outside.*  
*The students finished the test and then ran outside.*

## Dashes and Slashes

DASHES ARE MADE BY HITTING THE HYPHEN TWICE. Word will convert those two strokes into a single, long line ("—") when using Word's autocorrect capability. Type one space before and after a dash. Dashes are most often used to separate words or phrases within a sentence for emphasis, to provide details, or to set aside information that relates to but is a slight departure from the topic of the sentence. Dashes should be used sparingly.

SLASHES OCCUR (WITHOUT A SPACE BEFORE OR AFTER) in abbreviations, alternatives (e.g. *and/or*), fractions, and serial numbers.

## Ellipses

FOR REPORTS AND SIMILAR MATERIALS, the standard ellipses produced by Word when you type three periods in a row is acceptable: "we can ... do more." This is a departure from AP and may not apply to press releases and similar External Relations materials.

WHEN A PERIOD OCCURS BEFORE THE OMITTED MATERIAL, place the ellipses after the period. If the following text forms a sentence, capitalize the next sentence: "We can do more. ... Challenges exist, however, and must be met with innovation and perseverance."

If the following text does not form a sentence but follows logically from the previous text, leave out the period on the first sentence: "We can do more ... and will meet challenges with innovation and perseverance."

## Hyphens

HYPHENS ARE A SINGLE SHORT LINE, MADE BY HITTING THE HYPHEN KEY ONCE ("-"). Do not insert a space before or after a hyphen. Hyphens are used almost exclusively to hyphenate words and dates, particularly when using compound adjectives to modify a noun.

**EXAMPLES:** *full-time student, Coordinating Board-sponsored, 2000-01, college-level courses, lower-level curricula, Tech-Prep course, lower-division courses*

IN HEADINGS, use APA style instead of AP style and uppercase both terms of a compound (i.e. hyphenated) term.

**EXAMPLE:** *College-Level Course Offerings by Subject*

ETHNIC GROUPS SHOULD BE UNHYPHENATED, WHETHER USED as nouns or adjectives.

**EXAMPLES:** *Native Americans; Mandarin Chinese; African American studies*

## Periods

INSERT ONLY ONE SPACE BETWEEN SENTENCES.

USE A PERIOD AFTER WEB ADDRESSES that appear at the end of a sentence.

It's best to write out measurements, but if you use abbreviations, IN GENERAL, DO NOT USE A PERIOD AFTER MEASUREMENT ABBREVIATIONS, e.g., *mm, ft, yds*.

HOWEVER, DO USE A PERIOD AFTER THE ABBREVIATION FOR AN INCH (in.); without the period, the measurement could be misread as a preposition.

**EXAMPLES:** *The camera used 35 mm film.*

*The room was 10 ft by 20 ft. (Though preference would be: 10 feet by 20 feet).*

*The report was 3 in. thick. (Though preference would be: 3 inches thick.)*

## Quotation Marks

Follow printers' rules. A period or a comma always goes inside the quotation marks. A dash, semicolon, question mark, or exclamation only goes inside the quotation marks when they apply only to the quoted material; they go outside when they apply to the entire sentence.

**EXAMPLES:** *Some students "stop out," or fail to complete degrees, after earning as many as 60 semester credit hours.*

*He said, "Our goal is for 60% of Texans ages 25 to 34 to hold certificates or degrees by 2030."*

*The survey asked, "Did you apply for financial aid?"*

*How many people answered the survey question with "unsure"?*

For quotes within quotes, use single quotation marks.

**EXAMPLE:** *The student said, "When the professor asked, 'Who read the syllabus before class?' only three people raised their hands."*

## **Semicolons**

USE A SEMICOLON TO SEPARATE TWO INDEPENDENT CLAUSES not joined by a conjunction.

**EXAMPLE:** *The participants in the first study were paid; those in the second were unpaid.*

WITHIN A SENTENCE, USE SEMICOLONS TO SEPARATE three or more elements that have internal commas.

**EXAMPLES:** *We tested three groups: (a) low scorers, who scored fewer than 20 points; (b) moderate scorers, who scored between 20 and 50 points; and (c) high scorers, who scored more than 50 points.*

*The order was red, yellow, blue; blue, yellow, red; or yellow, red, blue.*

## Wordy Phrases and Plain-Language Choices

Please note that, in some cases, the word or phrase on the left may be a better choice than the suggested replacement. Use your judgment based on context and audience.

### Replace This . . .

accordingly  
afford an opportunity  
aforementioned  
a great number of  
all-time record high  
a number of  
additionally  
approximately  
as to whether  
at the lowest levels  
at the present time, at this point in time  
at the time that  
burgeoning  
by means of  
capability  
close proximity  
come to an agreement on  
commence  
consequently  
currently  
demonstrate a preference for  
due to the fact that  
during the course of  
endeavor to  
equally as  
finalize  
for the most part  
for the purpose of  
furthermore  
give approval for  
identical  
impacted by  
in accordance with  
incentivizing  
including, but not limited to  
indices  
initial  
in order to  
in order to eliminate  
in spite of the fact that  
in the event that  
in the month of January  
in the near future  
in the vicinity of  
is able to  
it is felt that (omit)  
kind of

### With This . . .

so  
allow, let  
as mentioned earlier  
many  
record, record level  
many, several, a few  
also, in addition  
about  
whether  
lowest  
now  
when  
growing, increasing  
with, in, by  
ability, can  
nearby, near  
agree  
start, begin  
so  
now  
prefer  
because  
during  
try to  
equally  
finish  
mostly  
for, to  
also, in addition  
approve  
same  
affected by  
by, following, under  
promoting, encouraging  
including  
indexes  
first  
to  
to eliminate  
although, despite  
if  
in January  
soon  
near  
can  
  
rather

### **Replace This . . .**

like  
limited number  
magnitude  
make a choice  
make a decision  
multiple  
myriad  
new record  
no later than  
not strong  
not well suited  
numerous  
of the opinion that  
on a monthly basis  
on or before December 2  
on the basis of  
on the part of  
optimum  
originally began  
per the discussion or request  
preeminent  
prior to  
prior estimate  
regarding  
relative to  
retain  
shall  
since the time when  
subsequent  
subsequent to  
sufficient  
terminate  
the question as to whether  
therefore  
the reason is that  
the table is a list of  
time period  
to perform an analysis  
underutilized  
until such time as  
usage of  
utilize  
whether or not  
with regard to  
with the exception of

### **With This . . .**

as, such as  
few, some  
size  
choose  
decide  
many  
many  
record  
by, for  
weak  
unfit, poorly suited  
many  
think  
monthly  
by December 2  
based on  
by  
best  
began  
as requested, as discussed  
primary, major  
before  
previous estimate  
about, of, on  
compared to, compared with  
keep  
will  
since  
next  
after  
enough  
end, stop  
whether  
so  
because  
the table shows  
time or period  
to analyze  
underused  
until  
use of  
use  
whether  
about  
except

## Document Components for Reports and Similar Materials

This section pertains to reports and similar materials produced by agency staff and may not apply to news articles, press releases, media toolkits, or materials produced for grants or the federal sector. Please adhere to specifications for the using the agency's logo and other design elements as set forth in the "Branding Guidelines" document available on the [the agency intranet Sharepoint site](#).

### Appendices

All appendices should be listed in the report's table of contents. Appendices headers should be styled using the "Appendix\_Head" style in the agency report template, which is Georgia, 14 pt, bold, navy, centered.

### Board Members

Check the latest list of board members for changes when overwriting a document as a new version. The agency report template should always have the current members.

### Charts

See [Figures](#).

### Citing the THECB

For reports, manuals, and similar materials written by staff, please include the following sentence (in 9-pt. Segoe UI) at the bottom of the board statement page:

Please cite this report as follows: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (20XX). Title of Report. Austin, TX.

### Citing data sets in reports and elsewhere

Cite THECB data as follows: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2018). Title of Data set [Data workbook]. Retrieved from X.

### Citing "Permission to Use" instances

When we receive permission from another organization to use their data or information in our reports or surveys, please include a statement, preferably as a footnote, upon the first use the data or information.

*EXAMPLE: This survey was adapted with permission from the XX Survey conducted by the XX organization. For permission to use this information, please contact [provide contact information].*

### Contact Information

Provide contact information for staff members at the end of the report.

### Executive Summary

An executive summary should be 1-2 pages in length and should summarize the background, key points, and recommendations contained in the report.

## Figures/Tables/Charts

If the report includes figures, charts, tables, etc., list them in separate sections in the table of contents titled "Figures," "Tables," etc., as appropriate. Format headings and captions for all figures, charts, and tables consistently throughout the document, following these style guidelines:

### TITLES

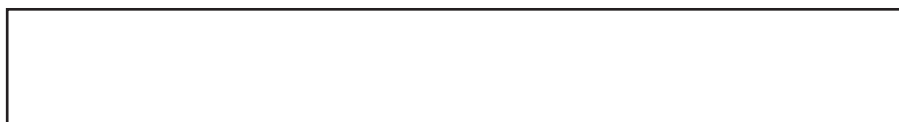
- Use Georgia, 10 pt., bold, navy, single spaced.
- The word "Figure" should be followed by the number of the figure and a period.
- The title is capitalized, following APA title case (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/capitalization/title-case>), without italics, and with no period at the end.
- *Note:* The Agency Report Template (available on the [THECB Intranet](#) Sharepoint) has styles already set up with proper formatting (i.e. "Figure\_Head," "Table\_Head," etc.).

### CAPTIONS

- Place any source captions or notes beneath the figure, with source lines first then notes below.
- Format using Segoe UI, 8 pt., italic, and no period (unless the note is a full sentence).
- Write the word "Source" with a colon, followed by the source info. Do the same for any "Note" or asterisked notes.

### EXAMPLE:

#### **Figure 2. Analysis of XX in Higher Education**



*Source: THECB*

*Note: A note should apply to the whole figure, chart, or table.*

*\*If just a specific point of data needs a remark, asterisk the datapoint in the figure and place the remark here with a corresponding asterisk.*

## Footnotes

Footnotes can be used for clarification, to define a term, or to cite a source for material.

For source citation, report authors have the choice of using either footnotes or a references page. Reference pages are preferable if you have large number of sources to cite. If you use a references page, do not include a footnote with a duplicate citation. See [References](#) for guidance on citing sources using a references page.

If you have only a few references and use footnotes to cite them instead of a references page, format them as you would on a references page, [according to APA style](#). When using footnotes, no in-line citation is needed.

Use Segoe UI, 9 pt., to style footnotes.

## Glossary

Some reports require a glossary section. If needed, include the glossary as an appendix.

Formatting:

- List terms in alphabetical order.
- Terms can be upper or lowercase – just be consistent.
- Format terms in bold with a dash or colon, followed by the term's definition.
- Start each definition with a capital letter and end with a period, even if it's not a complete sentence.

EXAMPLE: **Chart** – A type of figure presenting data in graphic form.

## Headings

For reports and other such materials, use the formatting for headings shown below. The agency report template has styles already set up with this formatting.

### Heading Level 1

This heading is 14 pt. Georgia, bold, centered, and uses upper and lowercase (title case), with 12 points of space after the heading. The color is navy (RGB settings for this color = 0, 62, 82), and in the agency report template, this style is set up as "CB\_Head1."

### Heading Level 2

This heading is 13 pt. Segoe UI, bold, flush left, and uppercase (title case), with 5 points of space before and 11 points of space after the heading. The color is blue (RGB settings = 3, 125, 164). In the agency report template, this style is set up as "CB\_Head2."

### Headline level 3

This heading is 12 pt. Segoe UI, bold, flush left, and only the first word is capitalized, with 6 points of space after the heading. The color is black. In the agency report template, this style is set up as "CB\_Head3."

**Headline level 4.** This heading is 11 pt. Segoe UI, bold, italic, and indented. Only the first word is capitalized, and only the first sentence is indented. A period is required after this heading. In the agency report template, this style is set up as "CB\_Head4."

Headline level 5. This heading is 11 pt. Segoe UI and indented. Only the first word is capitalized, and only the first sentence is indented. A period is required after this heading. In the agency report template, this style is set up as "CB\_Head5."

## ► Lists (Seriation)

### NUMBERED LISTS

Use a *vertical, numbered list* when order is important (for example, listing steps to take in a sequential order) or when the text specifies there is a set number of items. Use a colon after the introductory clause (preferably a complete sentence) and capitalize each list item.

#### EXAMPLE

To learn to drive, we recommend one of these three methods:

1. Take lessons from a driving school.
2. Attend driver's education.
3. Learn from your parents.

### BULLETS

Agency preference for *bulleted lists* is a complete sentence followed by a colon and a list of items. Capitalize the first word of each bullet (Word formats bullets this way automatically). Make sure list items use parallel construction, e.g., each item is a full sentence or begins with a verb, a noun, etc.

#### **EXAMPLE 1 - Complete sentence intro followed by bullets that are complete sentences (include periods at end):**

Students may have many reasons for stopping out:

- They may need to care for a family member.
- They may be experiencing a financial crisis.
- They may have changed their mind about their career or educational goals.

If list items are short and do not form complete sentences, even with the introductory phrase, put no punctuation between bullets.

#### **EXAMPLE 2 – Introductory sentence or clause followed by short bullets that are NOT complete sentences and don't form one with intro (no punctuation at the end):**

Marketable skills may be gained through many college activities:

- Learning in class
- Attending dramatic performances and cultural events
- Participating in sports

If neither the introductory clause nor bullets are complete sentences on their own, but they *form* a complete sentence when combined, put a period at the end of each bullet.

#### **EXAMPLE 3 – Introductory clause combined with bullet points form complete sentences:**

The program will give students the opportunity to:

- Earn college credit.
- Gain valuable work experience.

The requirements include:

- Being a student at a Texas institution of higher education in each of the four previous semesters before applying for the Lucky You Grant.
- Helping younger students succeed by mentoring them in an approved program designated by the applicant's institution of higher education.

## **Logos**

For guidance on using the agency's logo and other design elements, consult the "Branding Guidelines" document available on the [agency intranet Sharepoint site](#).

## **Page Numbering**

Page numbers begin after the table of contents. The Executive Summary is numbered using Roman numerals: i, ii, iii, iv, etc. The full report is numbered using Arabic numerals: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Report numbering continues through the appendices' sections. Use 11 pt. Overpass for page numbers.

## **References**

If using a references page, list full source citations on a page titled "References," placed at the end of the report, before any appendices. Format references [according to the APA](#).

Within text, use short [in-line citations](#) for sources, with the author's last name and the year of publication, to correspond to full citations on the References page. EXAMPLE: (Field, 2005)

## **Report Cover, Board Statement Page, and Back Cover**

See pages [35-37](#).

## **Running Text**

All main body text in the report should be Segoe UI, 11 pt., single spaced, with 6 pts. of space specified after paragraphs using Word's line spacing options. In the agency report template, this formatting is already set up in style "CB\_Text."

## **Table of Contents**

All reports must include a table of contents (TOC). Tables, figures, and appendices should be listed in separate sections in the TOC. A step-by-step manual on how to create a clickable, updateable TOC with different sections is available on CBNNet at <http://cbnet/Forms/146.pdf>.

See [Page Numbering](#).

## **Tables**

See [Figures](#).

## **Template for Reports**

A template that contains the report formatting described in this guide and shown on pages 37-39 is available on the [agency's intranet Sharepoint site](#) under "Agency Branded Templates."

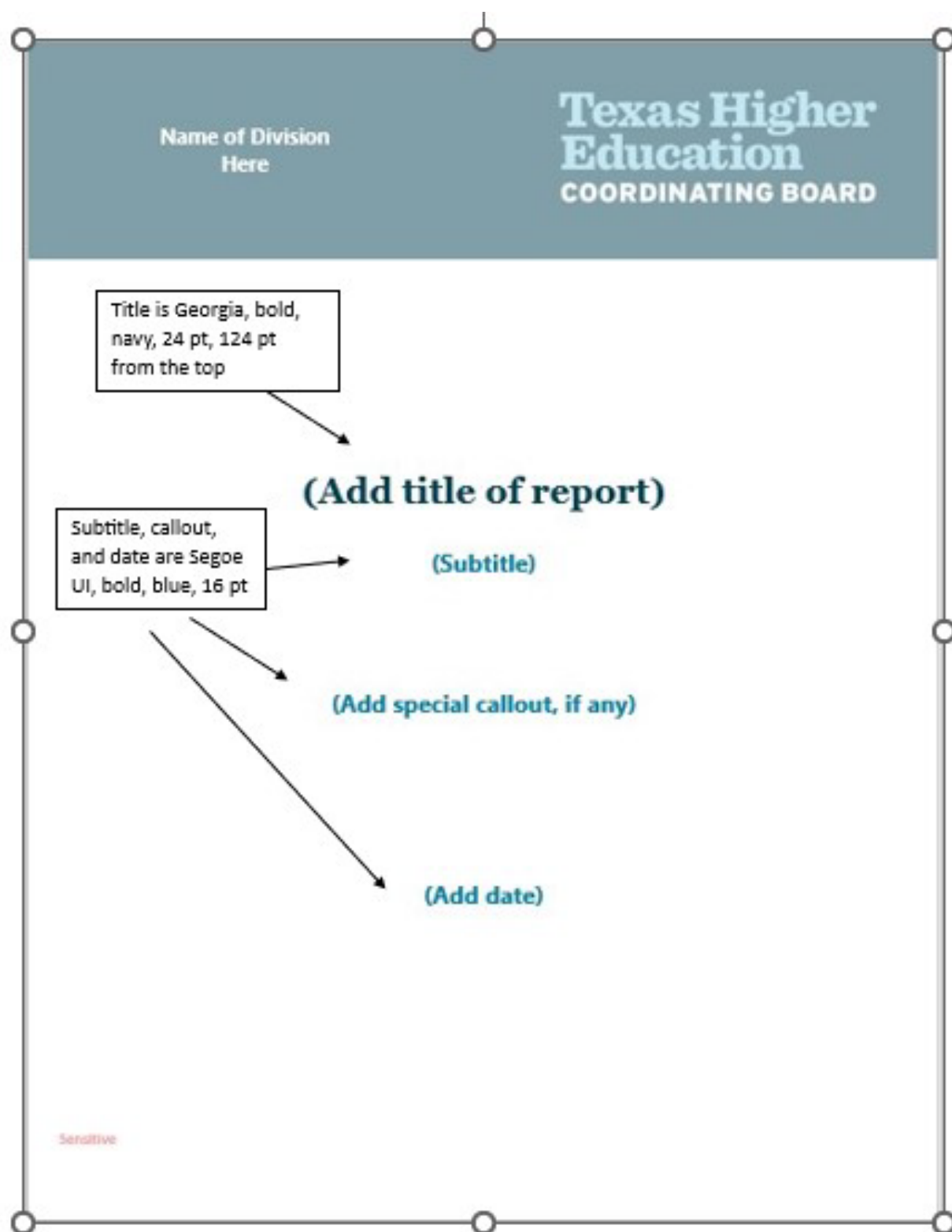
## Web Links

For web links, keep accessibility in mind. Avoid including both linked text and a spelled-out URL (e.g. "Find the X Report at www.texashighered.gov/xreport"). Including both is redundant and inefficient for a screen reader, which reads out each character of the URL. Best practice is to link concise, readable text rather than a URL. Only spell out a URL when unavoidable or if the document will be printed in hard copy and, thus, would not have live-linked text.

**EXAMPLE:** *You can find the 2020 College Report on the THECB website.*

For more tips and information about creating accessible text, see [Appendix D](#).

## Report Cover Example



The diagram illustrates a report cover template with a dark teal header bar. The header bar contains the text "Name of Division Here" on the left and "Texas Higher Education COORDINATING BOARD" on the right. Below the header bar, the main content area is white. A callout box on the left contains the text "Title is Georgia, bold, navy, 24 pt, 124 pt from the top" with an arrow pointing to the title "(Add title of report)". Another callout box on the left contains the text "Subtitle, callout, and date are Segoe UI, bold, blue, 16 pt" with three arrows pointing to the subtitle "(Subtitle)", the special callout "(Add special callout, if any)", and the date "(Add date)". A red "Sensitive" watermark is located in the bottom left corner.

Name of Division Here

**Texas Higher Education**  
COORDINATING BOARD

Title is Georgia, bold, navy, 24 pt, 124 pt from the top

**(Add title of report)**

Subtitle, callout, and date are Segoe UI, bold, blue, 16 pt

**(Subtitle)**

**(Add special callout, if any)**

**(Add date)**

Sensitive

## Board Statement Page (Following the Cover)

### Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



Fred Farias III, OD, MS, FAAO, CHAIR  
Stacy A. Hock, VICE CHAIR  
S. Javaid Anwar, SECRETARY TO THE BOARD  
Richard L. Clemmer  
Emma C. Nevarez  
Juan J. Nevarez  
Ashlie A. Thomas  
Welcome Wilson Jr.  
Daniel O. Wong  
Luke Schwartz, STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

McAllen  
Austin  
Midland  
Austin  
El Paso  
Dallas  
Victoria  
Houston  
Missouri City  
Tyler

NOTE: Always use the Agency Report Template to ensure the mission page includes most up-to-date list of board members.

Wynn Rosser, PhD, COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

#### Agency Purpose

Our purpose is to strengthen Texas through higher education. By making higher education accessible to a wide range of people, we can ensure Texas remains one of the world's most innovative, valuable educational systems. By bringing together data, policymakers, and institutions, we can inform sensible policies that make a difference and make education beyond high school available to every person in our state. When we do that, we will improve lives, communities, and our shared economy.

#### Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

#### Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The THECB's core values are:

**Accountability:** We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

**Efficiency:** We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

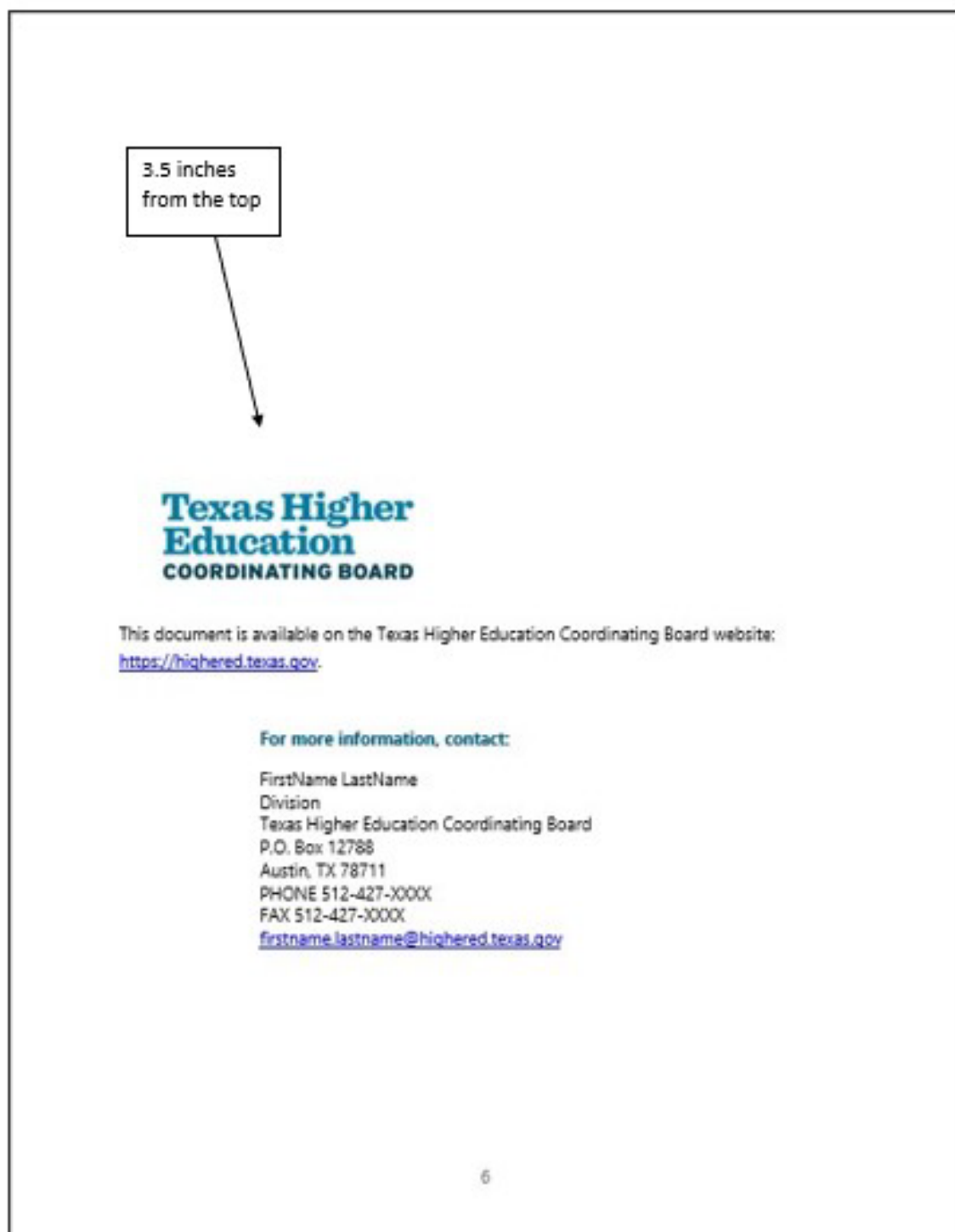
**Collaboration:** We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

**Excellence:** We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

Please cite this report as follows: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2025). Off-Campus Instruction Report. Austin, TX.

## Back Cover Example



## **A Brief Checklist**

### **Check the content.**

- For reports, are all required elements included (title page, board statement page, etc.)?
- Is the most important information on the first page (or in the Executive Summary) of your report or document?
- Is the document written clearly and understandable?
- Have you used plain-speaking language as much as possible? Are "jargon" words eliminated or explained?

### **Check the text.**

- Is appropriate formatting and style applied to text (headers and body content) throughout the document?

### **Check charts, figures, graphs, and tables.**

- Are charts, figures, graphs, and/or tables easily understood without much, if any, explanatory text?
- Are tables, etc. formatted appropriately throughout the document?
- Is the table of contents accurate, including both entries and page numbers?
- Do the subtitles, chapter names, and other headings within the document match what's in the table of contents (both text and punctuation)?
- Do the headings for figures, tables, etc. within the document match what's in the table of contents (both text and punctuation)?

### **Check spelling and formatting.**

- Did you spell check the final version of the document?
- Did you perform a visual check of your document after spell checking it?
- Do the page breaks throughout the document help make the document readable?

### **Check accessibility.**

- Does linked text use descriptive words instead of generic phrases like "click here" or written out URLs?
- Did you use Word "Styles" to format headings?
- Are tables formatted without merged cells? Did you mark the top row as a header row?
- Do graphics and images have alt text added? Are they formatted as "In Line with Text"?
- Did you run the Word "Check Accessibility" tool?
- For more tips and information about creating accessible text, see [Appendix D](#).

## Appendix A: Preferred Names for Public Institutions of Higher Education

Use the full name for each Texas institution of higher education in Coordinating Board publications for the first appearance. Use the full name or the preferred abbreviation for subsequent mentions.

### Public Two-Year Institutions

| PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION                                                                                                                   | ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT       | ABBREVIATION CHARTS & GRAPHS |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alamo Colleges District                                                                                                                       | Alamo CD                    | Alamo Colleges               |
| Alamo District-Northeast Lakeview College                                                                                                     | Alamo-Northeast Lakeview    | ACD-Northeast                |
| Alamo District-Northwest Vista College                                                                                                        | Alamo-Northwest Vista       | ACD-Northwest Vista          |
| Alamo District-Palo Alto College                                                                                                              | Alamo-Palo Alto             | ACD-Palo Alto                |
| Alamo District-San Antonio College                                                                                                            | Alamo-San Antonio           | ACD-San Antonio              |
| Alamo District-St. Philip's College                                                                                                           | Alamo-St. Philip's          | ACD-St. Philip's             |
| Alvin Community College                                                                                                                       | Alvin                       | Alvin                        |
| Amarillo College                                                                                                                              | Amarillo                    | Amarillo                     |
| Angelina College                                                                                                                              | Angelina                    | Angelina                     |
| Austin Community College                                                                                                                      | Austin CC                   | ACC                          |
| Blinn College District                                                                                                                        | Blinn                       | Blinn                        |
| Brazosport College                                                                                                                            | Brazosport                  | Brazosport                   |
| Central Texas College                                                                                                                         | Central Texas               | Central Texas                |
| Cisco College                                                                                                                                 | Cisco                       | Cisco                        |
| Clarendon College                                                                                                                             | Clarendon                   | Clarendon                    |
| Coastal Bend College                                                                                                                          | Coastal Bend                | Coastal Bend                 |
| College of the Mainland                                                                                                                       | College of the Mainland     | COM                          |
| College of the Mainland Community College District                                                                                            | College of the Mainland CCD | COMCCD                       |
| Collin County Community College District                                                                                                      | Collin CCD                  | Collin                       |
| Dallas College                                                                                                                                | Dallas                      | Dallas                       |
| Dallas College Brookhaven Campus                                                                                                              | Dallas-Brookhaven           | Dallas-Brookhaven            |
| Dallas College Cedar Valley Campus                                                                                                            | Dallas-Cedar Valley         | Dallas-Cedar Valley          |
| Dallas College Eastfield Campus                                                                                                               | Dallas-Eastfield            | Dallas-Eastfield             |
| Dallas College El Centro Campus                                                                                                               | Dallas-El Centro            | Dallas-El Centro             |
| Dallas College Mountain View Campus                                                                                                           | Dallas-Mountain View        | Dallas-Mountain View         |
| Dallas College North Lake Campus                                                                                                              | Dallas-North Lake           | Dallas-North Lake            |
| Dallas College Richland Campus                                                                                                                | Dallas-Richland             | Dallas-Richland              |
| Del Mar College                                                                                                                               | Del Mar                     | Del Mar                      |
| El Paso Community College District                                                                                                            | El Paso CCD                 | El Paso CCD                  |
| Frank Phillips College                                                                                                                        | Frank Phillips              | Frank Phillips               |
| Galveston College                                                                                                                             | Galveston                   | Galveston                    |
| Grayson College                                                                                                                               | Grayson                     | Grayson                      |
| Hill College                                                                                                                                  | Hill                        | Hill                         |
|  Houston City College (formerly Houston Community College) | Houston CC                  | Houston CC                   |
| Howard College District                                                                                                                       | Howard CD                   | Howard                       |
| Howard College-Big Spring                                                                                                                     | Howard-Big Spring           | Howard-Big Spring            |
| Howard College-Lamesa                                                                                                                         | Howard-Lamesa               | Howard-Lamesa                |

## Public Two-Year Institutions, con't.

| PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION                                                                                                                           | ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT       | ABBREVIATION CHARTS & GRAPHS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Howard College-San Angelo                                                                                                                             | Howard-San Angelo           | Howard-San Angelo            |
| Howard College-SouthWest College for the Deaf                                                                                                         | Howard-SWCD                 | Howard-SWCD                  |
| Kilgore College                                                                                                                                       | Kilgore                     | Kilgore                      |
| Lamar Institute of Technology                                                                                                                         | Lamar-IOT                   | Lamar-IOT                    |
| Lamar State College Orange                                                                                                                            | Lamar-Orange                | Lamar-Orange                 |
| Lamar State College Port Arthur                                                                                                                       | Lamar-Port Arthur           | Lamar-Port Arthur            |
| Laredo College                                                                                                                                        | Laredo                      | Laredo                       |
| Lee College                                                                                                                                           | Lee                         | Lee                          |
| Lone Star College System                                                                                                                              | Lone Star CS                | Lone Star                    |
| Lone Star College-CyFair College                                                                                                                      | Lone Star-CyFair            | LSCS-CyFair                  |
| Lone Star College-Houston North                                                                                                                       | Lone Star-Houston North     | LSCS-Houston N               |
| Lone Star College-Kingwood                                                                                                                            | Lone Star-Kingwood          | LSCS-Kingwood                |
| Lone Star College-Montgomery                                                                                                                          | Lone Star-Montgomery        | LSCS-Montgomery              |
| Lone Star College-North Harris                                                                                                                        | Lone Star-North Harris      | LSCS-North Harris            |
| Lone Star College-Tomball                                                                                                                             | Lone Star-Tomball           | LSCS-Tomball                 |
| Lone Star College-University Park                                                                                                                     | Lone Star-University Park   | LSCS-Univ Park               |
| McLennan Community College                                                                                                                            | McLennan                    | McLennan                     |
| Midland College                                                                                                                                       | Midland                     | Midland                      |
| Navarro College                                                                                                                                       | Navarro                     | Navarro                      |
| North Central Texas College                                                                                                                           | North Central Texas         | North Central Tx             |
| Northeast Texas Community College                                                                                                                     | Northeast Texas             | Northeast Tx                 |
| Odessa College                                                                                                                                        | Odessa                      | Odessa                       |
| Panola College                                                                                                                                        | Panola                      | Panola                       |
| Paris Junior College                                                                                                                                  | Paris                       | Paris                        |
| Ranger College                                                                                                                                        | Ranger                      | Ranger                       |
| San Jacinto College District                                                                                                                          | San Jacinto CD              | San Jacinto                  |
| San Jacinto College-Central Campus                                                                                                                    | San Jacinto-Central         | SJC-Central                  |
| San Jacinto College-Generation Park Campus                                                                                                            | San Jacinto-Generation Park | SJC-Generation               |
| San Jacinto College-North Campus                                                                                                                      | San Jacinto-North           | SJC-North                    |
| San Jacinto College-Maritime Campus                                                                                                                   | San Jacinto-Maritime        | SJC-Maritime                 |
| San Jacinto College-South Campus                                                                                                                      | San Jacinto-South           | SJC-South                    |
| South Plains College                                                                                                                                  | South Plains                | South Plains                 |
| South Texas College                                                                                                                                   | South Texas                 | South Texas                  |
|  Southwest Texas College (formerly Southwest Texas Junior College) | SWTC                        | SWTC                         |
| Tarrant County College District                                                                                                                       | Tarrant CCD                 | Tarrant                      |
| Tarrant County College District-Connect Campus                                                                                                        | Tarrant-Connect             | TCCD-Connect                 |
| Tarrant County College District-Northeast Campus                                                                                                      | Tarrant-Northeast           | TCCD-Northeast               |
| Tarrant County College District-Northwest Campus                                                                                                      | Tarrant-Northwest           | TCCD-Northwest               |
| Tarrant County College District-South Campus                                                                                                          | Tarrant-South               | TCCD-South                   |
| Tarrant County College District-Southeast Campus                                                                                                      | Tarrant-Southeast           | TCCD-Southeast               |

## Public Two-Year Institutions, con't.

| PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION                             | ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT           | ABBREVIATION CHARTS & GRAPHS |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Tarrant County College District-Trinity River Campus    | Tarrant-Trinity River           | TCCD-Trinity River           |
| Temple College                                          | Temple                          | Temple                       |
| Texarkana College                                       | Texarkana                       | Texarkana                    |
| Texas Southmost College                                 | Texas Southmost TSTC System     | Tx Southmost TSTC            |
| Texas State Technical College                           | TSTC                            | TSTC                         |
| Texas State Technical College in Abilene                | TSTC in Abilene                 | TSTC in Abilene              |
| Texas State Technical College in Breckenridge           | TSTC in Breckenridge            | TSTC in Breckenridge         |
| Texas State Technical College in Brownwood              | TSTC in Brownwood               | TSTC in Brownwood            |
| Texas State Technical College in East Williamson County | TSTC in East Williamson County  | TSTC in E Williamson Co      |
| Texas State Technical College in Fort Bend County       | TSTC System in Fort Bend County | TSTC in Ft Bend Co           |
| Texas State Technical College in Harlingen              | TSTC in Harlingen               | TSTC in Harlingen            |
| Texas State Technical College in Marshall               | TSTC in Marshall                | TSTC in Marshall             |
| Texas State Technical College in New Braunfels          | TSTC in New Braunfels           | TSTC in New Braunfels        |
| Texas State Technical College in North Texas            | TSTC in North Texas             | TSTC in North TX             |
| Texas State Technical College in Sweetwater             | TSTC in Sweetwater              | TSTC in Sweetwater           |
| Texas State Technical College in Waco                   | TSTC in Waco                    | TSTC in Waco                 |
| Trinity Valley Community College                        | Trinity Valley                  | Trinity Valley               |
| Tyler Junior College                                    | Tyler                           | Tyler                        |
| Vernon College                                          | Vernon                          | Vernon                       |
| Victoria College                                        | Victoria                        | Victoria                     |
| Weatherford College                                     | Weatherford                     | Weatherford                  |
| Western Texas College                                   | Western Texas                   | Western TX                   |
| Wharton County Junior College                           | Wharton                         | Wharton                      |

## Public Four-Year Institutions

| PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION                                              | ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT | ABBREVIATION CHARTS & GRAPHS |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Angelo State University                                                   | Angelo State          | ASU                          |
| ▶ East Texas A&M University (formerly Texas A&M University-Commerce)      | East TAMU             | ETAMU                        |
| Lamar University                                                          | Lamar                 | LU                           |
| Midwestern State University                                               | MSU Texas             | MSU-TX                       |
| Prairie View A&M University                                               | Prairie View          | PVAMU                        |
| Sam Houston State University                                              | SHSU                  | SHSU                         |
| Stephen F. Austin State University                                        | SFA                   | SFA                          |
| Sul Ross State University                                                 | Sul Ross              | Sul Ross                     |
| Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College                              | Sul Ross-Rio Grande   | Sul Ross-RG                  |
| Tarleton State University                                                 | Tarleton State        | TaSU                         |
| Texas A&M International University                                        | TAM-International     | TAMIU                        |
| Texas A&M University                                                      | TAMU                  | TAMU                         |
| Texas A&M University at Galveston                                         | TAMU-Galveston        | TAMU-G                       |
| Texas A&M University-Central Texas                                        | TAMU-Central Texas    | TAMU-CT                      |
| Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi                                       | TAMU-Corpus Christi   | TAMUCC                       |
| Texas A&M University-Kingsville                                           | TAMU-Kingsville       | TAMU-K                       |
| Texas A&M University-San Antonio                                          | TAMU-San Antonio      | TAMU-SA                      |
| Texas A&M University-Texarkana                                            | TAMU-Texarkana        | TAMU-Texarkana               |
| ▶ Texas A&M University-Victoria (formerly University of Houston-Victoria) | TAMU-Victoria         | TAMU-V                       |
| Texas Southern University                                                 | Texas Southern        | TSU                          |
| Texas State University                                                    | Texas State           | TXST                         |
| Texas Tech University                                                     | Texas Tech            | TTU                          |
| Texas Woman's University                                                  | Texas Woman's         | TWU                          |
| The University of Texas at Arlington                                      | UT-Arlington          | UT-Arlington                 |
| The University of Texas at Austin                                         | UT-Austin             | UT-Austin                    |
| The University of Texas at Dallas                                         | UT-Dallas             | UT-Dallas                    |
| The University of Texas at El Paso                                        | UT-El Paso            | UTEP                         |
| The University of Texas at San Antonio                                    | UT-San Antonio        | UTSA                         |
| The University of Texas at Tyler                                          | UT-Tyler              | UT-Tyler                     |
| The University of Texas Permian Basin                                     | UT-Permian Basin      | UTPB                         |
| The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley                                 | UT-RGV                | UTRGV                        |
| University of Houston                                                     | UH                    | UH                           |
| University of Houston-Clear Lake                                          | UH-Clear Lake         | UHCL                         |
| University of Houston-Downtown                                            | UH-Downtown           | UH-D                         |
| University of North Texas                                                 | UNT                   | UNT                          |
| University of North Texas at Dallas                                       | UNT-Dallas            | UNT-D                        |
| West Texas A&M University                                                 | West Texas A&M        | WTAMU                        |

## Public Health-Related Institutions

| PUBLIC HEALTH-RELATED                                        | ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT     | ABBREVIATION CHARTS & GRAPHS |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine | SHSU-COM                  | SHSU-COM                     |
| Texas A&M University Health Science Center                   | TAMU-HSC                  | TAMU-HSC                     |
| Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center                 | Texas Tech-UHSC           | TTUHSC                       |
| Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso         | Texas Tech-UHSC-El Paso   | TTUHSC-El Paso               |
| The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School        | UTDMS                     | UTDMS                        |
| The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston     | UTHSC-Houston             | UTHSC-Houston                |
| The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio | UTHSC-San Antonio         | UTHSC-SA                     |
| The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler       | UTHSC-Tyler               | UTHSC-Tyler                  |
| The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center          | UT-MD Anderson            | UTMDACC                      |
| The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston          | UTMB                      | UTMB                         |
| The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine | UTRGV School of Medicine  | UTRGV MS                     |
| The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center          | UT Southwestern           | UTSW                         |
| University of Houston College of Medicine                    | UH College of Medicine    | UH COM                       |
| University of North Texas Health Science Center              | UNT Health Science Center | UNTHSC                       |

## Appendix B: Abbreviations and Acronyms

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>FULL NAME IN TEXT</u>                                                                                 |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAD            | Applied Associate Degree                                                                                 |
| AACC           | American Association of Community Colleges                                                               |
| AAMC           | Association of American Medical Colleges                                                                 |
| AARTS          | Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools                                                  |
|                | Accreditation Commission                                                                                 |
| AAS            | Associate of Applied Science                                                                             |
| AASCU          | American Association of State Colleges and Universities                                                  |
| AAT            | Associate of Arts in Teaching                                                                            |
| ABE            | adult basic education                                                                                    |
| ABFSE          | American Board of Funeral Service Education                                                              |
| ABHE           | Association of Biblical Higher Education (undergraduate only)                                            |
| ABHES          | Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools                                                           |
| ACAOM          | Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine                                           |
| ACBSP          | Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs                                                  |
| ACCET          | Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training                                                  |
| ACICS          | Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools                                                 |
| ACCJC          | Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,<br>Western Association of Schools and Colleges |
| ACCSC          | Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges                                                    |
| ACCT           | Association of Community College Trustees                                                                |
| ACE            | American Council on Education                                                                            |
| ACGM           | Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual                                                              |
| ACGME          | Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education                                                      |
| ACICS          | Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges                                                             |
| ACORP          | Advisory Committee on Research Programs                                                                  |
| ACT            | American College Testing Program                                                                         |
| ACTE           | Association for Career and Technical Education                                                           |
| ADA            | Americans with Disabilities Act                                                                          |
| ADM            | accumulated deferred maintenance                                                                         |
| ADP            | Annual Data Profile                                                                                      |
| Advise TX      | Advise Texas                                                                                             |
| AFR            | Annual Financial Report (upper or lower case, relative to context)                                       |
| AIR            | Association for Institutional Research                                                                   |
| AOA            | American Osteopathic Association                                                                         |
| AP             | Advanced Placement program                                                                               |
| ApplyTexas     | ApplyTexas (no acronym; no space between words)                                                          |
| APSCU          | Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (formerly<br>Career College Association - CCA)   |
| AOS            | Associate of Occupational Studies                                                                        |

**ACRONYM****FULL NAME IN TEXT**

|        |                                                                             |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ARP    | Advanced Research Program                                                   |
| ATC    | Advanced Technical Certificate                                              |
| ATEA   | American Technical Education Association                                    |
| ATP    | Advanced Technology Program                                                 |
| ATS    | Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools         |
| AUF    | Available University Fund                                                   |
| AVATAR | Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal                            |
| AVIA   | American Vocational Information Association                                 |
| AVID   | Advancement Via Individual Determination                                    |
| AY     | academic year                                                               |
| BLS    | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics                                             |
| BON    | Texas Board of Nursing                                                      |
| CACG   | College Access Challenge Grant                                              |
| CAE    | Center for Aid to Education                                                 |
| CASP   | Conference on Academic Support Programs                                     |
| CBM    | Coordinating Board Management Report                                        |
| CBO    | community-based organization (upper or lower case, relative to context)     |
| CCCIE  | Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education                        |
| CCRS   | College and Career Readiness Standards                                      |
| CCST   | Career Colleges and Schools of Texas (state level affiliate of APSCU)       |
| CDM    | critical deferred maintenance                                               |
| CERT   | certificate program                                                         |
| CERT1  | Certificate Program 1 – Level 1 (6-15 SCH beyond an associate degree)       |
| CERT2  | Certificate Program 2 – Level 2 (15-42 SCH)                                 |
| CERT3  | Certificate Program 3 – Level 3 (30-51 SCH)                                 |
| CEU    | continuing education unit                                                   |
| CFGO   | Council of Faculty Governance Organizations                                 |
| CHEA   | Council for Higher Education Accreditation (a descendant of COPA and CORPA) |
| CIP    | Classification of Instructional Programs Code                               |
| CLEP   | College-Level Examination Program                                           |
| COC    | Commission on Colleges (a division of SACS)                                 |
| COE    | Commission on Education; also Council on Occupational Education             |
| COEI   | Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (defunct)                 |
| COP    | Committee of Practitioners                                                  |
| CORD   | Center for Occupational Research and Development                            |
| CPM    | Critical Path Method (a project management planning technique)              |
| CRNAA  | Council of Recognized National Accrediting Agencies                         |
| CRSA   | College Readiness Special Advisors                                          |
| CSSP   | Comprehensive Student Success Program                                       |
| CWS    | College Work-Study Program                                                  |
| DACUM  | Developing a Curriculum (This usage refers to the copyrighted process.)     |

## ACRONYM

## FULL NAME IN TEXT

|           |                                                                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DAP       | Distinguished Achievement Program                                               |
| DARS      | Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services                       |
| DE        | developmental education                                                         |
| DEAC      | Distance Education Accrediting Commission                                       |
| DETC      | Distance Education and Training Council                                         |
| DOE       | U.S. Department of Energy                                                       |
| DPSVEDT   | Division of Proprietary Schools, Veterans Education, & Driver Training          |
| E&G       | Educational and General (referring to the revenue type)                         |
| ECFMG     | Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates                            |
| ECO-DISAD | economically disadvantaged                                                      |
| ED        | U.S. Department of Education                                                    |
| EFC       | Expected Family Contribution (replaced by Student Aid Index in 2024-25)         |
| FAFSA     | Free Application for Federal Student Aid                                        |
| FCA       | Foundational Component Area                                                     |
| FERPA     | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act                                       |
| FFELP     | Family Federal Education Loan Program                                           |
| FICE      | Federal Interagency Committee on Education Code                                 |
| FOSC      | Field of Study Curriculum                                                       |
| FTSE      | full-time student equivalent                                                    |
| FTIC      | first-time-in-college                                                           |
| FTE       | full-time faculty equivalent                                                    |
| FY        | fiscal year (capitalize if used with a specific year)                           |
| GEAC      | Graduate Education Advisory Committee                                           |
| GED       | General Educational Development                                                 |
| GenTX     | Generation Texas                                                                |
| GIPWE     | Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education                    |
| GME       | Graduate Medical Education (may or may not be capitalized, relative to context) |
| Grad TX   | Grad TX (no acronym; use full name as shown)                                    |
| GSF       | gross square feet                                                               |
| HB        | House Bill                                                                      |
| HBCU      | historically Black colleges and universities                                    |
| HEA       | Higher Education Act                                                            |
| HEAF      | Higher Education Access Fund                                                    |
| HERC      | See <i>ThERC</i>                                                                |
| HSI       | Hispanic-Serving Institution                                                    |
| HLC       | Higher Learning Commission                                                      |
| HUB       | Historically Underutilized Business                                             |
| HVAC      | heating, ventilation, and air conditioning                                      |
| IB        | International Baccalaureate program                                             |
| ICUT      | Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas                                  |
| IDRA      | Intercultural Development Research Association                                  |

**ACRONYM****FULL NAME IN TEXT**

|          |                                                                                                                     |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IE       | Institutional Effectiveness (may be capitalized, relative to context)                                               |
| IEE      | Institutional Effectiveness and Excellence (may be capitalized, relative to context; from SACS-COC resource manual) |
| IHE      | institution of higher education                                                                                     |
| IMG      | international medical graduates                                                                                     |
| IPAES    | Intensive Programs for Adult Education Students                                                                     |
| IPEDS    | Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System                                                                      |
| ISD      | independent school district                                                                                         |
| IT       | instructional telecommunication                                                                                     |
| JCSPAT   | Junior College Student Personnel Association of Texas                                                               |
| JTPA     | Job Training Partnership Act                                                                                        |
| KINE     | Kinesiology (in Texas Core Curriculum context)                                                                      |
| LAR      | Legislative Appropriations Request                                                                                  |
| LBB      | Legislative Budget Board                                                                                            |
| LVN      | licensed vocational nurse                                                                                           |
| MITC     | multi-institution teaching center (may be capitalized if part of a proper noun)                                     |
| MOU      | memorandum of understanding                                                                                         |
| MP       | master plan (may be capitalized if part of a proper noun)                                                           |
| MSCHE    | Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools                                   |
| NACTC    | National Alliance of Community and Technical Colleges                                                               |
| NACUBO   | National Association of College and University Business Officers                                                    |
| NADE     | National Association for Developmental Education                                                                    |
| NASASPS  | National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Proprietary Schools                                 |
| NASF     | net assignable square feet                                                                                          |
| NASDCTEC | National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education consortium                                    |
| NASULGC  | National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges                                                  |
| NAST     | National Association of Schools of Theatre                                                                          |
| NATTS    | National Association of Trade and Technical Schools                                                                 |
| NCATC    | National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers                                                                   |
| NCBOs    | non-course competency-based options                                                                                 |
| NCCCBO   | National Council of Community College Business Officials                                                            |
| NCDE     | National Center for the Development of Education                                                                    |
| NCDM     | non-critical deferred maintenance                                                                                   |
| NCES     | National Center for Education Statistics                                                                            |
| NCIA     | National Council of Instructional Administrators                                                                    |
| NCHEMS   | National Center for Higher Education Management Systems                                                             |
| NCOE     | National Council for Occupational Education                                                                         |
| NCRA     | National Court Reporters Association                                                                                |
| NCRVE    | National Center for Research in Vocational Education                                                                |
| NCVE     | National Council on Vocational Education                                                                            |

**ACRONYM****FULL NAME IN TEXT**

|            |                                                                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NEASC-CIHE | Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of School and Colleges |
| NES        | National Evaluation Series                                                                     |
| NISOD      | National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development                                    |
| NOICC      | National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee                                       |
| NRAO       | Non-Regionally Accredited Organization                                                         |
| NWCCU      | Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities                                              |
| OCR        | Office for Civil Rights                                                                        |
| OES        | Occupational Employment Statistics (usually referred to as OES codes)                          |
| OVAE       | Office of Vocational and Adult Education                                                       |
| Pell       | Not PELL. Not an acronym; grant is named for U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell.                      |
| PERT       | Program Evaluation and Review Technique                                                        |
| PHED       | Physical Education (in Texas Core Curriculum context)                                          |
| PQ&S       | Program Quality and Standards Advisory Committee                                               |
| PSAC       | Proprietary School Advisory Commission                                                         |
| PUF        | Permanent University Fund                                                                      |
| PY         | program year (capitalize if used with a specific year)                                         |
| R&D        | research and development                                                                       |
| R&R        | repair and rehabilitation                                                                      |
| SACSCOC    | Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges                            |
| SAIR       | Southern Association for Institutional Research                                                |
| SAI        | Student Aid Index (replaced Expected Family Contribution in 2024-25)                           |
| SAT        | Scholastic Assessment Test                                                                     |
| SB         | Senate Bill                                                                                    |
| SBEC       | State Board for Educator Certification                                                         |
| SBOE       | State Board of Education                                                                       |
| SCANS      | Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills                                           |
| SCH        | semester credit hour                                                                           |
| SEOG       | Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant                                                     |
| SES        | socioeconomic status                                                                           |
| SHCC       | Statewide Health Coordinating Council                                                          |
| SHEEO      | State Higher Education Executive Officers                                                      |
| SHPE       | Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers                                                     |
| SOAH       | (Texas) State Office of Administrative Hearings                                                |
| SOICC      | (Texas) State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee                                  |
| SREB       | Southern Regional Education Board                                                              |
| STARLINK   | State of Texas Academic Resources Link                                                         |
| STEM       | science, technology, engineering, and mathematics                                              |
| SWQN       | Southwest Quality Network                                                                      |
| TAAS       | Texas Assessment of Academic Skills                                                            |
| TAB        | Texas Affordable Baccalaureate                                                                 |

**ACRONYM****FULL NAME IN TEXT**

|          |                                                                             |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TABE     | Test of Adult Basic Education                                               |
| TABPHE   | Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education                    |
| TACRAO   | Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers          |
| TACC     | Texas Association of Community Colleges                                     |
| TACCCSAA | Texas Association of Community College Chief Student Affairs Administrators |
| TACE     | Texas Association for Continuing Education                                  |
| TACHE    | Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education                           |
| TACRAO   | Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers          |
| TACTE    | Texas Association of College Technical Educators                            |
| TADC     | Texas Association of Developing Colleges                                    |
| TADE     | Texas Association for Developmental Education                               |
| TADLAS   | Texas Association of Deans of Liberal Arts and Sciences                     |
| TAIR     | Texas Association of Institutional Researchers                              |
| TAJCCIA  | Texas Association of Junior/Community College Instructional Administrators  |
| TAKS     | Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills                                    |
| TAPIC    | Texas Association of Private Industry Council                               |
| TAPJCBO  | Texas Association of Public Junior College Business Officers                |
| TAPS     | Texas Association of Private Schools (no longer in operation)               |
| TAPSOEA  | Texas Association of Post-Secondary Occupational Education Administrators   |
| TASB     | Texas Association of School Boards                                          |
| TASP     | Texas Academic Skills Program                                               |
| TASSCUBO | Texas Association of State College and University Business Officers         |
| TASUA    | Texas Association of State University Attorneys                             |
| TBC      | Texas Business Council                                                      |
| TBEC     | Texas Business and Education Coalition                                      |
| TCC      | Texas Core Curriculum                                                       |
| TCCIO    | Texas Community College Instructional Officers                              |
| TCCNS    | Texas Common Course Numbering System                                        |
| TCLEOSE  | Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education         |
| TCSUL    | Texas Council of State University Librarians                                |
| TCWEC    | Texas Council on Workforce and Economic Competitiveness                     |
| TDH      | Texas Department of Health                                                  |
| TDHS     | Texas Department of Human Services                                          |
| TDLR     | Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation                                |
| TDOC     | Texas Department of Commerce                                                |
| TEA      | Texas Education Agency                                                      |
| TEC      | Texas Education Code                                                        |
| TEG      | Tuition Equalization Grant                                                  |
| TEKS     | Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills                                        |
| TEOG     | Texas Educational Opportunity Grant                                         |
| TETC     | Texas Engineering and Technical Consortium                                  |

**ACRONYM****FULL NAME IN TEXT**

|             |                                                                     |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TEXANE      | Texas Alliance for the Next Economy                                 |
| TEXAS Grant | Toward EXcellence, Access, and Success Grant                        |
| TFA         | Texas Faculty Association                                           |
| TFC         | Texas Fire Commission                                               |
| TGSLC       | Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation                           |
| THERC       | Texas Higher Education Regional Councils                            |
| TIC         | Texas Industrial Council                                            |
| TINS        | Texas Innovation Network                                            |
| TJCMEA      | Texas Junior College Management Educators Association               |
| TJCTA       | Texas Junior College Teachers Association                           |
| TOP         | Table of Programs                                                   |
| TPC/JCA     | Texas Public Community/Junior Colleges Association                  |
| TPEG        | Texas Public Education Grant                                        |
| TPEIR       | Texas PK-16 Public Education Information Resource                   |
| TPF         | Tuition Protection Fund                                             |
| TRB         | Tuition Revenue Bonds                                               |
| TPSA        | Texas Proprietary School Act                                        |
| TRACS       | Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools         |
| TSI         | Texas Success Initiative                                            |
| TSSB        | Texas Skills Standards Board                                        |
| TSTC        | Texas State Technical College                                       |
| TTF         | Texas Tomorrow Fund                                                 |
| TVPGPS      | Technical and Vocational Program Guidelines for Proprietary Schools |
| TWC         | Texas Workforce Commission                                          |
| TWD         | Technology Workforce Development Grant Program                      |
| TWIC        | Texas Workforce Investment Council                                  |
| TWIST       | Workforce Information System of Texas                               |
| TWO         | Technology Workforce Development Grant Program                      |
| TXCRLA      | Texas College Reading and Learning Association                      |
| UEAC        | Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee                          |
| URRS        | Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategy                          |
| USMG        | United States Medical Graduate Workforce Education Course           |
| VS RP       | Verification of Standards Review Process                            |
| WATTS       | Western Association of Trade and Technical Schools                  |
| WE          | workforce education                                                 |
| WECM        | Workforce Education Course Manual                                   |
| WICHE       | Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education                  |
| WIOA        | Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act                            |
| WSCUC       | WASC Senior College and University Commission                       |

## Appendix C: Rule, Bill, and Statute Citations

Many non-legal agency documents require that legislation or regulatory rules be cited. Legislation starts as a bill and, when passed the Legislature, is codified into statute, usually for the Texas Education Code for our agency. Additionally, state agencies enact regulatory rules, found in the Texas Administrative Code. Use the citation styles that follow to cite bills, rules, and statutes in reports, studies, correspondence, and other non-legal documents.

### Citing Bills

Generally, bills are cited as follows:

*First reference:* House Bill (HB) 386, 81st\* Texas Legislature

*Second reference:* HB 386, 81st Texas Legislature

*First reference:* Senate Bill (SB) 432, 81st Texas Legislature

*Second reference:* SB 432, 81st Texas Legislature

\*Note that we do not use superscript for the letters that follow session numbers.

Sometimes there are special sessions (or “called” sessions). Because the bill numbering sequence starts over, there could be a bill of the same number in each special session. Therefore, the session must be designated to avoid confusion:

HB 5, 79th Texas Legislature, Regular Session

HB 5, 79th Texas Legislature, First Called Session

HB 5, 79th Texas Legislature, Second Called Session

### A Special Case: The General Appropriations Act

The General Appropriations Act is always referred to as a bill. It is not codified into statute. The General Appropriations Act is a Senate Bill in odd-numbered sessions and a House Bill in even-numbered sessions. It is always numbered 1. For the 81st Texas Legislature, for instance, it was SB 1. For the 82nd Texas Legislature, it was HB 1.

WHEN REFERRING TO THE ACT AS A WHOLE:

General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature

WHEN REFERRING TO AN ARTICLE IN THE ACT:

General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature, Article III

WHEN REFERRING TO A PARTICULAR PAGE OF AN ARTICLE IN THE ACT:

General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature, Article III-44

WHEN REFERRING TO A PARTICULAR “RIDER” IN THE ACT:

General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Article III, Section 45, 80th Texas Legislature

## Citing Rules

Cite rules by spelling out the name of the code and all applicable sub-parts of code necessary for a reader to navigate easily to the rule being referenced (e.g. title, part, chapter, section, etc.).

### EXAMPLES:

*First reference:* Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter A

*Subsequent references:*

TAC, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter A

*First reference for a specific section:* Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 21, Subchapter II, Section 21.1080(b)

*Options for subsequent references:*

TAC, Title 19, Part 1, Ch. 21, Section 21.1080(b)

TAC Section 21.1080(b)

TAC 21.1080(b) *[less preferable but can be used where space is tight]*

**Note:** Do not put the title number first when abbreviating, as is often done in legal writing, e.g., "19 TAC, Section 21.1080(b)", and avoid using the symbol § that's often used in legal texts.

This format gives the author some latitude in determining what sub-parts are necessary for a reader to easily find a statute.

## Citing Statute

As with rules, cite the name of the code and all applicable sub-parts of the code necessary for a reader to navigate easily to the statute being referenced.

### EXAMPLES:

Texas Education Code, Title 3, Section 63.002

Texas Education Code, Title 3, Subchapter Q

### For multiple references in a document:

*First reference:* Texas Education Code (TEC), Title 3, Section 63.002

*Options for subsequent references:*

TEC, Title 3, Section 63.002

TEC Section 63.002

TEC 63.002 *[less preferable but can be used where space is tight]*

**Note:** Do not put the title number first when abbreviating, as is often done in legal writing, e.g., "3 TEC, Section 63.002", and avoid using the symbol § often used in legal texts.

## Other Helpful Hints

When referring to the Texas Legislature (or any state legislature when the state name is included), use uppercase for both words. In subsequent text, if you but are still referring to that

specific legislature, retain capitalization of "Legislature."

**EXAMPLE:** The 85th Texas Legislature convenes tomorrow. The Legislature will be in session until May.

When referring to a particular legislative session, but not the legislature itself, use lowercase.

**EXAMPLE:** The 85th legislative session ended with few people happy.

Here are some things to keep in mind when deciding whether to use the citation for a bill or a rule/statute in your document:

- If it is during session and a bill has not yet passed, use the citation for a bill.
- If a bill did not pass but must be referred to in a historical sense, use the citation for a bill.
- If the bill passed recently (in the most recent session, for instance), consider citing the legislation as both a bill and statute to help the reader understand that it is a recent change in statute.

**EXAMPLES:**

*HB 2978, 80th Texas Legislature (codified as Texas Education Code 61.791), requires...*

*HB 2978, 80th Texas Legislature, was codified as Texas Education Code 61.791 and requires . . .*

- In most cases, if the bill passed several years/sessions ago, cite only the statute or rule.

However, if the bill passed years ago but referring to the bill number helps the reader remember a particular program or initiative, continue to use both.

**EXAMPLE:** *HB 5, 83rd Texas Legislature, which was passed and signed into law in 2013, is still a commonly used identifier for that initiative (high school endorsements).*  
In cases like this, continue to use both the bill citation and the statute citation.

**When to use the nouns *act*, *amendment*, *bill*, *law*, *measure*, *ordinance*, *resolution*, *rule*, *statute* (from AP Stylebook)**

The word *act* is sometimes included in a formal name for pending or implemented legislation. Capitalize when part of the name: the Taft-Hartley Act.

An *amendment* is a change or proposed change to a bill or law. Amendments are usually passed or enacted.

A *bill* is a draft proposal presented to a lawmaking body, such as a legislature, that requires debate, voting, and final approval before it can become a law. Bills usually pass or fail or are approved or signed. Do not capitalize in references to specific legislation: the Kennedy bill. Use conditional language for bills throughout the legislative process, e.g. *The bill would prohibit such activity*; or *The bill seeks to legalize the drug*.

A *law* is a bill that has been approved by a lawmaking body, usually at the state or federal level, and that sometimes requires the signature of an executive such as a governor or president. Laws are usually enacted, and they don't necessarily take effect at the time they are enacted.

An *ordinance* is the municipal equivalent of a law. Ordinances are enacted. Before they become ordinances, they should usually be called proposals or proposed ordinances.

A *resolution* is a sentiment or recommendation of a lawmaking body, often described as binding or nonbinding depending on whether it has the force of law. Resolutions are adopted or fail.

A *rule* is an authoritative regulation that can be enacted, created, or ordered at various levels of government.

A *statute* is a written and enacted law or ordinance.

Any of the above terms can also be described generically as *measures*, provided no confusion would result.

## Appendix D: Creating Accessible Documents

Public documents produced by the THECB and available online must be accessible according to state law. Documents must meet accessibility standards to make the work of the agency available to all Texans. Below are some tips on creating accessible documents. The accessible agency template for creating reports is available on the [agency intranet Sharepoint site](#).

### What is an “accessible document”?\*

An accessible document is a document easily readable by both sighted readers and those using assistive technology. The document is designed and structured to allow assistive technology, such as a screen reader or magnification software, to effectively access and interact with the content.

### ➤ What do I need to do to make my document accessible?

- **Use styled headings** to break up content. Using pre-formatted "Styles" (under the "Home" tab in Word) helps screen readers interpret a document. Headings also convert to bookmarks, providing additional navigation as well.
- **Include white space** around images and headings. Use the paragraph style feature (see below) to create space instead of inserting line breaks, which a screen reader will read out loud.
- **Format images as "In Line with Text."** Images with text wrapping can be difficult for screen readers to interpret.
- **Use actual text instead of images of text.** The exception to this rule is logos.
- **Add alt text to images.** Alt text provides a description of an image for someone who can't see it. Images that have no function should be marked as decorative. Examples of decorative images are: (1) a stock photo used as background or to set the tone of a page, or (2) an image that illustrates something fully described in adjacent text, such as a photo of an author next to a paragraph giving the author's bio.

Images that convey information, such as a chart, should have alt text that describes the elements of the image and a summary of the information presented. Ex: "A pie chart showing the breakdown of Pell Grant recipients, indicating 85.5% Pell recipients and 14% non-Pell recipients."

To add alt text:

- o Right-click the image.
  - o Select "Edit Alt Text."
  - o Describe the content of the image (not the appearance) in 1-2 sentences.
  - o If an image is just decorative, mark it as such in the box under the text box, and a screen reader will ignore it.
- **Don't rely on color only to convey information.** If you use a color to convey information, also provide another indicator for someone who can't see color.

- o Example 1: On a form, if you use red text to indicate required information, also add an asterisk to the required fields and include a note (so a screen reader can read it) that says, "All required fields are marked with an asterisk."
- o Example 2: In a bar graph, if the colors used in the bars don't have a lot of contrast, add hatching or a pattern to the bars to differentiate.
- **In tables, add a title and headers.** Make sure each row and column has a header to help screen readers indicate how information appears in the table. For tables that span more than one page, format the header row to repeat at the top of each page:
  - o Highlight the header row.
  - o Right-click and choose "Table Properties."
  - o Check the box next to "Repeat as header row at the top of each page" in the Row tab.
- **In tables, avoid merged cells.** If a table is too complex to present information without merging cells, consider breaking it into multiple tables to simplify the presentation of the information.

### How do I use paragraph styles to add white space?

Right-click on the paragraph, heading, image, etc. where you want to add space. Select "Paragraph," then under "Spacing," enter the desired amount of white space you want to add before or after the element. Similarly, to push content to the next page, rather than adding line breaks with the Enter key, put a page break where you want to push to the next page.

### How do I format links in my documents to be accessible?

For URLs and linked text:

- Make sure that what a screen reader would read out as linked text makes sense to the listener without the surrounding content. Avoid linking from generic text like "click here" or "read more."
- Avoid including both linked text and a spelled-out URL (such as "*Find the 2020 College Report at www.texashighered.gov/collegereport."*). Including both is redundant and inefficient for a screen reader, which must read out each character of the URL.

Best practice is to link concise, readable text rather than a URL. Only include a spelled-out URL when unavoidable or if the document will be printed in hard copy and, thus, would not have live-linked text.

**EXAMPLE:** *You can find the 2020 College Report on the THECB website.*

For email addresses, write out the full email address, rather than a description:

- **Accessible:** Sally.Helpful@highered.texas.gov
- **Not accessible:** Accessibility Help

### How do I know if my document is accessible?

For Word documents, use the Accessibility Checker found under the "Review" tab. If the

document was created in an old version of Word, update to the latest version, then run the check and address any problems it finds.

For a PDF, use the Accessibility Checker found in the "Tools" menu on the righthand bar. Select the "Full Check" option and address any problems it finds.

## **Standards**

Government standards for accessibility cover both documents and technology.

[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG 2\)](#)  
[Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#)

## **Links and resources for creating accessible documents**

- THECB [accessibility tips](#)
- Microsoft's [Make your Word documents accessible](#)
- Office of the Governor [accessibility site](#)
- HHS [Accessibility Center](#)
- THECB Word template for creating accessible reports available on the [agency intranet Sharepoint site](#).

## Appendix E: Proofreading Marks (for hard copy markup)

|                 |                                        |                      |                                                         |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| ⊙               | Insert period                          | <i>rom.</i>          | Roman type                                              |
| ↗               | Insert comma                           | <i>caps.</i>         | Caps—used in margin                                     |
| :               | Insert colon                           | ≡                    | Caps—used in text                                       |
| ;               | Insert semicolon                       | <i>c+sc</i>          | Caps & small caps—used in margin                        |
| ?               | Insert question mark                   | ≡                    | Caps & small caps—used in text                          |
| !               | Insert exclamation mark                | <i>l.c.</i>          | Lowercase—used in margin                                |
| ≠               | Insert hyphen                          | /                    | Used in text to show deletion or substitution           |
| ↓               | Insert apostrophe                      | ⤵                    | Delete                                                  |
| ↔               | Insert quotation marks                 | ⤵                    | Delete and close up                                     |
| —               | Insert 1-en dash                       | <i>w.f.</i>          | Wrong font                                              |
| —               | Insert 1-em dash                       | ○                    | Close up                                                |
| #               | Insert space                           | ⌋                    | Move right                                              |
| ⌋               | Insert ( ) points of space             | ⌋                    | Move left                                               |
| <i>shilling</i> | Insert shilling                        | ⌋                    | Move up                                                 |
| ✓               | Superior                               | ⌋                    | Move down                                               |
| ∧               | Inferior                               |                      | Align vertically                                        |
| (/)             | Parentheses                            | =                    | Align horizontally                                      |
| [/]             | Brackets                               | ⌋⌋                   | Center horizontally                                     |
| □               | Indent 1 em                            | ⌋                    | Center vertically                                       |
| □□              | Indent 2 ems                           | <i>eq. #</i>         | Equalize space—used in margin                           |
| ¶               | Paragraph                              | ✓✓✓                  | Equalize space—used in text                             |
| <i>no ¶</i>     | No paragraph                           | .....                | Let it stand—used in text                               |
| <i>tr</i>       | Transpose <sup>1</sup> —used in margin | <i>stat.</i>         | Let it stand—used in margin                             |
| ~               | Transpose <sup>2</sup> —used in text   | ⊗                    | Letter(s) not clear                                     |
| <i>sp</i>       | Spell out                              | <i>run over</i>      | Carry over to next line                                 |
| <i>ital</i>     | Italic—used in margin                  | <i>run back</i>      | Carry back to preceding line                            |
| —               | Italic—used in text                    | <i>out, see copy</i> | Something omitted—see copy                              |
| <i>b.f.</i>     | Boldface—used in margin                | <i>SI?</i>           | Question to author to delete <sup>3</sup>               |
| ~               | Boldface—used in text                  | ∧                    | Caret—General indicator used to mark position of error. |
| <i>s.c.</i>     | Small caps—used in margin              |                      |                                                         |
| —               | Small caps—used in text                |                      |                                                         |

<sup>1</sup> In lieu of the traditional mark “tr” used to indicate letter or number transpositions, the striking out of the incorrect letters or numbers and the placement of the correct matter in the margin of the proof is the preferred method of indicating transposition corrections.

<sup>2</sup> Corrections involving more than two characters should be marked by striking out the entire word or number and placing the correct form in the margin. This mark should be reserved to show transposition of words.

<sup>3</sup> The form of any query carried should be such that an answer may be given simply by crossing out the complete query if a negative decision is made or the right-hand (question mark) portion to indicate an affirmative answer.