

# Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Writing Style Guide

*Updated March 31, 2019*

This style guide is a living document that is dependent on input and improvement from all DSA departments and programs. To update or add entries to this guide, [email Sondra White](#), director of marketing and communications.

---

## **BECKY GATES CHILDREN'S CENTER**

### **Becky Gates Children's Center**

Use Becky Gates Children's Center on first reference. Use “the center” or BGCC on the references that follow.

### **Becky Gates**

In 2006 the center was named in honor of Becky Gates, wife of former U.S. Defense Secretary and Texas A&M University President Robert Gates, after a generous donation from Dorothy J. and Arthur McFerrin Jr. '65.

### **Project Approach**

A set of teaching strategies that enable teachers to guide students through in-depth studies of real-world topics.

### **waitlist**

### **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

### **AdvancED Accreditation**

### **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**

### **Child Care Management Services Provider**

### **English Language Learner**

### **Anti-Bias Education**

The Becky Gates Children's Center has adopted the Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves (Derman-Sparks L. & Edwards, J., 2010) four core goals.

### **Open the Gates to a Lifetime of Learning**

Our tagline.

### **Texas Rising Star Provider**

Texas Rising Star is a quality-based child care rating and improvement system for early childhood programs participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's subsidized child care program.

### **emergent curriculum**

A philosophy of teaching and way of planning curriculum that focuses on being responsive to children's interests to create meaningful learning experiences. It can be practiced at any grade level.

### **21st century learning**

Refers to certain core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving that advocates believe schools need to teach to help students thrive in today's world.

### **Child initiated/teacher supported**

### **early childhood education**

### **child development associate**

### **early childhood intervention**

### **Texas Association for the Education of Young Children**

### **Tuition Express**

A web-based system through which child care payments can be made. Whether by electronic fund transfer, online, card swipe or completely automated, payments are convenient for parents, and on-time and integrated for providers.

### **teaching assistant**

**HighScope**

**COR Advantage**

**Family Advisory Board**

**Learn, Grow, Eat, Go!**

---

**CORPS OF CADETS**

**Aggie Eagle Program**

**Civil Air Patrol**

**cadets**

**Corps of Cadets**

“Corps” is always plural.

**Corps of Cadets Association**

**Corps Hall of Honor**

**Drill and Ceremony cadets**

**Final Review**

Final Review is held at the end of the spring semester in May. Final Review contains two passes on Simpson Drill Field: the first pass led by the graduating seniors, the second pass led by rising leadership.

**fish**

Freshmen in the Corps. They have not earned the privilege of capitalization unless referenced at the beginning of a sentence or in the case of Fish Drill Team.

**Fish Drill Team**

**Freshman Orientation Week (FOW)**

Occurs the week before the fall semester begins.

**Hollingsworth Center for Ethical Leadership**

**Junior Cadet Accessions Program**

**Junior ROTC**

**Keepers of the Spirit**

**March-In**

Capitalize only if referring to the event.

**March to the Brazos**

**officers of the day**

**O.R. Simpson Honor Society**

**Parsons Mounted Cavalry (PMC)**

Note: No apostrophe in "Parsons." Often referred to as "the Cav."

**Quad**

**Rally to the Guidons**

**Ross Volunteer Company**

**ROTC (Army, Navy, Air Force)**

**Sanders Corps of Cadets Center**

Use "Corps Center" on second reference.

**Spend the Day with the Corps**

**Spend the Night with the Corps**

---

## DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DoIT)

---

### DISABILITY SERVICES

#### **Person-first and Identity-first language**

Person-first language places emphasis on the person as an individual rather than their disability. In doing so, the disability is not the primary, defining characteristic, but rather an aspect of their entire identity.

A growing number of folks are moving to Identity First Language wherein they embody and recognize disability as a part of their identity. For example, the Deaf community typically uses "Deaf [Insert Identifier]" (Deaf woman, Deaf child, Deaf neighbor, etc.).

Current practice is to always follow the lead of the person with a disability. If someone says they are a disabled man, practice cultural humility and use the title they have given themselves. Disability Services uses person-first language for many of its content and publications.

#### **When and when not to use the words "disabled," "special needs," "handicapped," "retarded," etc.**

Disabled is a word that is starting to come back into favor in the disability community as some are claiming that as an important part of their identity. Much like you wouldn't say, "She's a person who is a woman." Or " He is a person who is a man and black." Disabled reflects a way of identifying themselves as a part of the identity and community. "Special needs" is a term contested in higher education as we typically ask, "Don't we all have different needs? What makes someone's needs special? What connotation are we placing when we refer to one's requests or needs as "Special"?" Handicapped is an antiquated term that no longer reflects equality for individuals in the disability community. Using the term may reflect a negative connotation of disability as being pitiful or less than. Retarded is a pejorative term that is unacceptable for discourse. The appropriate terms that most use are "Developmental Disability" or "Intellectual Disability". The word "impaired" should also be avoided in all contexts, as it implies the individual is the "problem" or "less than" rather than the environment which is the impairment.

### **substantially-limiting**

A legal term as referenced in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments, substantially-limiting refers to the degree in which a disability impacts one's ability to perform major life activities such as seeing, hearing, walking, lifting, breathing and others.

### **academic accommodation / academic adjustments**

A term which describes the process of considering one's disability and access barriers to ensure accessibility and equity of the academic experience.

Accommodations are meant to promote access and are not intended to modify essential requirements of the program or give students an unfair advantage.

Consider the example of extended testing time. Students take the same exam at the typical difficulty level, the way in which they complete the exam is adjusted providing opportunity for students to accurately demonstrate their knowledge of the subject.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

An anti-discrimination law which provides legal protections for individuals with disabilities engaging in societal activities such as transportation, employment, housing and education.

In post-secondary education, the ADA is applied through the use of accommodations. The ADA calls for reasonable accommodations for course content which provides access for students to participate without modifying the essential requirements or outcomes of the course.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

IDEA is a law which applies to K-12 education by guaranteeing individuals with disabilities an education. IDEA calls for modification of curriculum to ensure that individuals with disabilities can participate in the education system. Modifications can include substantial changes to the curriculum (such as modifying the number of assignments or exams a student takes, the number of lessons they are expected to complete, etc.)

### **access coordinator**

An individual within Disability Services that facilitates access to educational experiences at Texas A&M University by engaging in an interactive process through collection of requests, information, and input from students, faculty, and qualified

medical providers in determining what accommodations would be appropriate in a course or program.

### **self-advocacy**

The right and ability of an individual with a disability autonomously articulating and advocating for their needs. Students affiliated with Disability Services at Texas A&M University receive a documentation letter to share with their instructor to advocate for their needs rather than staff members interceding on their behalf.

### **TrackerOnline**

A web portal owned by Disability Services where students can print a copy of their documentation letter and schedule exams to be taken in the Testing Administration Center.

### **Testing Administration Center (TAC)**

A service available to faculty and students which offers a convenient and flexible location for the use of exam accommodations, such as extended testing time, a reduced-distraction environment and assistive technology.

### **Assistive Technology Services (ATS)**

A program within Disability Services which offers assessment, training and support for technologies which support access to course content. These technologies can include text-to-speech, screen reading and screen magnification software. ATS also houses a team of student employees who produce alternative format course materials for students who have difficulty accessing print materials and need electronic versions of text for use with their technology.

### **Universal Design for Learning**

The pedagogical approach to transmitting educational material in a way that is accessible to all individuals regardless of disability, age, culture, learning preference, or lived experience. Universal Design for Learning is an active process that faculty, staff, and students engage in to make content available to all students, not a destination or “end goal”.

### **empowerment**

The process of engaging in person centered practices with the aim of assisting individuals to become autonomous in their decision making and life. Empowerment is an evolving process that individuals in all communities participate in for the betterment of themselves and their situation.

### **social model of disability**

A way of viewing disability as an issue with the built and/or societal environment. The social model of disability shifts the focus on disability away from the person as being a “problem” or needing to be “fixed” and instead, focuses on the environment which is preventing an individual from fully participating in the community. A common view of the social model is looking at the accessibility of buildings. Instead of focusing on the wheelchair user as needing to be “fixed” one would look at the building and possibly ask, “Why are their stairs to the front door? Is there a way to design the building so that one does not need to enter through a backdoor that is an “accessible entrance”?

### **medical model of disability**

A way of viewing disability as an issue within an individual that can be treated or cured. The medical model of disability focuses on the individual and trying to work toward a solution within and for that individual. A common example of the medical model is looking at migraines. The individual with a migraine may go to a doctor who diagnoses and tries to treat the migraines with a particular medicine of course of treatment to alleviate the symptoms of the migraines.

### **blindness**

The spectrum of diminished eyesight which can vary in acuity, clarity, color recognition and light perception. Because of the wide variety of visual disabilities and their impacts, individuals use several accommodations for mobility and accessing information. Many stereotypes portray those with visual disabilities as totally blind, though this category of visual disabilities is significantly low comparatively.

### **deaf**

An individual with diminished or significant deafness to sound. The existence of Deaf Culture amongst the Deaf community and its advocates often views the Deaf as a linguistic minority rather than a disability. Deafness occurs on a spectrum, ranging from hard of hearing to profound deafness. Language acquisition, mode of communication access (e.g. individual may or may not use sign language), use of aids or assistive technology (e.g. views on the use or appropriateness of hearing aids or cochlear implants), and language or sign system preference vary greatly among individuals in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. Deaf is an overarching definition that includes, but is not limited to, the following subcategories in which identities may intersect: Deaf (culturally Deaf), deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, Deaf Disabled, and Latened Deaf.

## **learning disabilities**

A broad range of disabilities including disabilities typically thought of such as Dyslexia to lesser known disabilities such as Auditory Processing Disorder. Learning disabilities are non-apparent and account for a much larger percentage of disabilities compared to disabilities traditionally thought of by most individual such as people with physical or apparent disabilities (ex: wheelchair users, blind individuals, etc.)

---

## **MEMORIAL STUDENT CENTER**

---

## **DEPARTMENT OF MULTICULTURAL SERVICES**

### **Department of Multicultural Services (DMS)**

The stand-alone name “Multicultural Services” is used only for our social media handles, usually following “TAMU.” Example: TAMU Multicultural Services

### **RISE (Race, Identity & Social Equity) Conference**

### **campus climate grant**

### **Aggies to Aggies (A2A)**

Do not use Aggies 2 Aggies

### **Cultural Leadership, Understanding, and Exploration for Scholars (CLUES)**

### **Cultural Explorations**

### **diversity certificate**

### **Excellence uniting Culture, Education, and Leadership (ExCEL)**

Do not capitalize the letter “x” in this formal program name.

### **Asian Presidents’ Council (APC)**

### **Black Student Alliance Council (BSAC)**

### **Hispanic Presidents’ Council (HPC)**

## **Latino Logradores (LatiLo)**

## **Fusion Fiesta**

## **Black/African-American**

AP Style holds that African-American is acceptable for an American black person. Black is also acceptable. These two terms are not necessarily interchangeable, however. For instance, people from Caribbean nations generally refer to themselves as Caribbean-Americans

## **Hispanic/Latinx/a/o**

Preferred method of use when referring to the entire population of students.

## **African American Student Leadership Institute (AASLI)**

This is no longer a program.

## **Institute for the Development and Education of Asian American Leaders (IDEAAL)**

## **Aggie Black Male Connection (ABMC)**

## **Latino Males United (LMU)**

## **Courageous Conversations**

## **Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American (APIDA) Heritage Month**

## **Black History Month**

## **Dr. Carter G. Woodson Black Awareness Committee (WBAC)**

This is an MSC program, however, we often collaborate.

## **Hispanic Heritage Month**

---

## **MUSIC ACTIVITIES**

The Department of Music Activities is comprised of the following programs:

**Choral Activities:** Singing Cadets, Century Singers, and Women's Chorus

**University Bands:** Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, Wind Symphony, Symphonic Winds, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, and University Jazz Ensembles.

**University Orchestras:** Chamber Orchestra and Philharmonic Orchestra

### **Hullabaloo Band**

A program of the Athletic Department.

The Fightin' Texas Aggie Band is an academic class offered by the College of Education/Department of Health and Kinesiology. The other ensembles are offered as academic classes in the College of Liberal Arts/Department of Performance Studies and the ensemble directors are adjunct faculty.

Membership in the Corps of Cadets is required for the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, but the other ensembles are open for all students.

Texas A&M does not offer a music major, therefore all students in the ensembles are non-music majors.

### **John D. White '70 - Robert L. Walker '58 Music Activities Center. (MAC)**

Opening August 2019.

---

## **OFFICES OF THE DEAN OF STUDENT LIFE**

### **Student Conduct Office**

### **Health Promotion**

### **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) Resource Center**

### **Graduate Student Services (GSS)**

### **New Student and Family Programs (NSFP)**

### **New Student Conference (NSC)**

Use New Student Conference on first reference and NSC on second reference.

### **Aggie Parent & Family Advisory Council**

Do not abbreviate.

### **Aggie Family Ambassadors (AFA)**

Use Aggie Family Ambassadors on first reference and AFAs on second reference.

### **Parents of the Year**

Do not abbreviate.

### **Family Weekend**

The university's weekend dedicated to recognizing Aggie family members is now known as Family Weekend. The term Parents' Weekend should no longer be used.

### **Howdy Week**

Aggieland's week of welcome is now known as Howdy Week. The term Gig 'em Week should no longer be used.

### **Orientation Leaders**

The student leaders dedicated to enhancing the New Student Conference experience. Formerly the Aggie Orientation Leader Program (AOLP). Use Orientation Leaders on first reference and OLs on second reference.

### **Aggie Family Network Portal**

Online platform for news and information from Texas A&M for Aggie families launched in spring 2019. Do not abbreviate.

### **ATMentors**

This program is no longer in action. Do not use.

### **Family Resource Guide**

New Student Conference Handbook: Use New Student Conference Handbook on first reference and NSC Handbook on second reference.

### **Aggie Family Calendar**

**Student Assistance Services (SAS)**

**Off-Campus Student Services (OCSS)**

**Student Legal Services**

**Student Media**

**Women's Resource Center**

---

**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATIONAL SPORTS**

**Student Recreation Center (SRC)**

On second reference, use "The Rec" or "The Rec Center," but NOT "The Student Rec Center"

**Rec Sports**

Use this abbreviation in reference to all our department has to offer: (fitness, intramural sports, strength and conditioning, sport clubs, outdoor adventures, aquatics, etc.) as well as our facilities (Penberthy Rec Sports Complex, PEAP, Student Recreation Center, etc.)

**Texas A&M Sport Club Association**

---

**RESIDENCE LIFE**

---

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

---

**STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICE**

---

**STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES (SHS)**

"Services" is plural in our formal name. Always include the "s."

### **A.P. Beutel Health Center**

The formal name of building in which we are located. On second reference, you may use “the health center,” “the health clinic.”

Do not use “Quack Shack.”

The following are units within our clinic:

Case Management

Lab

Nutrition Services

Pharmacy

Physical Therapy

Preventive Medicine

Radiology

Women’s Clinic

---

### **STUDENT LIFE STUDIES**

We refer to our customers as clients.

### **Aggies RISE (Reflecting and Integrating Student Employment)**

#### **Assessment Boot Camp**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

---

### **UNIVERSITY ART GALLERIES (UART)**

#### **Department Name**

Texas A&M University Art Galleries – Note “The” is not part of the official name and should only be capitalized if used at the beginning of a sentence. Lowercase galleries when used as a common noun.

e.g. The Texas A&M University Art Galleries is home to many works of original art. The galleries also hosts events and receptions.

## **Second Reference**

University Art Galleries

## **Singular, Collective Noun**

Note that the Texas A&M University Art Galleries is a single, collective noun, made up of multiple galleries, and it uses a singular verb.

e.g. The Texas A&M University Art Galleries is located inside the Memorial Student Center on the Texas A&M University campus.

## **Galleries**

The Texas A&M University Art Galleries is comprised of two main galleries, known as the **J. Wayne Stark Galleries** and the **Forsyth Galleries**. Despite both galleries having multiple galleries within them, they are treated as single, collective nouns and use singular verbs.

e.g. The J. Wayne Stark Galleries is home to a permanent collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century works of art.

e.g. The Forsyth Galleries is located on the second floor of the Memorial Student Center.

The **Reynolds Gallery**, located inside the Forsyth Galleries, is not affiliated with the Texas A&M University Art Galleries; it is managed by the MSC Visual Arts Committee.

## **patrons**

Visitors to our galleries.

## **docent**

A volunteer who leads guided tours of the exhibitions; “docent” and “volunteer” are not necessarily interchangeable, as a volunteer can take on many tasks other than docent.

**director** and **curator** are not interchangeable.

The director of our department oversees both galleries and runs the department; she also happens to be the curator of the J. Wayne Stark Galleries. In this role, she is responsible for the care and keeping of the Stark collection. The curator of the

Forsyth Galleries is also the assistant director of the department. They each have roles and responsibilities as director/assistant director that are separate from their roles as curators.

### **composition titles**

Exhibition and exhibit titles are referenced in italics. Works of art titles are referenced in quotes in written copy and in sentences, e.g. news releases, social media posts, website copy, etc.; they are referenced in italics when standing alone, e.g. captions, labels, wall texts.

### **exhibition/exhibit**

An exhibition refers to a selection of objects. An exhibit refers to one object on display.

### **student guards**

Student guards are Texas A&M University students who oversee the front desk security and operations of the public facing side of the Texas A&M University Art Galleries.

---

## **UNIVERSITY CENTER & SPECIAL EVENTS**

University Center & Special Events

- Never write out the word “and.”
- Only use the ampersand (&) symbol.
- We are “University Center & Special Events” not “the University Center & Special Events”

Official names of the facilities this department manages:

- Memorial Student Center
- Rudder Tower
- Rudder Theatre Complex
- John J. Koldus Building
- All Faiths Chapel
- Albritton Bell Tower
- University Center Guest Suites
- Outdoor spaces
  - Forster Interior Courtyard & Garden
  - Rudder Plaza

- Koldus Plaza
- Sul Ross Plaza
- Academic Plaza (resource tables & sandwich boards only)
- Sbisa Plaza (resource tables & sandwich boards only)
- Chemistry Fountain Plaza (sandwich boards only)

---

**VETERAN RESOURCE & SUPPORT CENTER**