



EDITORIAL GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE ASSURANCE ARGUMENT

The most important editorial guidelines for the Assurance Argument will not be about form or appearances but about content. The Accreditation Liaison will be able to correct any lapses in grammar or mechanics, but it will be up to the writers of the different sections of the report to supply the necessary analysis and support.

Format and Style Guidelines

1. All reports should be written in Microsoft Word and submitted via email to the Accreditation Liaison.
2. Body type should be in Times New Roman, 12 pt. Headings are hard-coded into the Assurance system.
3. Body text should be single-spaced with two spaces between paragraphs and no indentation of paragraphs.
4. Don't justify text; all text should be flush left.
5. The tone of the reports will be objective. Not stiff or rigidly formal but straightforward, clear and well supported.
6. To avoid sexist language and to avoid the awkwardness of "he or she", try using plural pronouns and plural antecedents ("students" rather than "student" and "they" rather than "he" or "she").
7. Sentences should be followed by only one space, not two as was once the accepted style.

General Mechanics

1. Refer to Central Ohio Technical College as Central Ohio Technical College, COTC or the college (see college/university section below for more specific guidelines).
2. Refer to the regional campus as "The Ohio State University at Newark" the first time it is referenced. Subsequent references should be "Ohio State Newark".
3. Italicize titles of book-length publications: *Central Ohio Technical College 2011 – 2012 Catalog, Criteria for Accreditation*.

4. Abbreviations and acronyms - Use the full name in the initial reference followed by the abbreviation or acronym in parenthesis.

College of Arts and Sciences (not Arts & Sciences)
Procter & Gamble (official name)
Large Binocular Telescope (LBT)

5. Avoid using an ampersand unless it is part of an official title.

College of Arts and Sciences
Kuhn Honors & Scholars House

6. When referring to both institutions simultaneously, i.e., when any outside event is held on the campus:

(preferred) The Newark Campus of The Ohio State University and Central Ohio Technical College
(when space is a critical issue we will allow) Ohio State Newark/COTC
(least preferred; only in second reference) the Newark Campus

7. Use “part-time faculty” instead of “adjunct faculty”.

8. Use “faculty” instead of “instructors”.

9. Refer to “autumn” instead of “fall” semester.

10. Numbers one through nine should be spelled out, use numerals for 10 or more and for fractions; spell out numbers that begin or end a sentence, or rewrite the sentence.

In running text, when referring to dollar amounts in millions, use the numeral and “million”.

\$6 million (not \$6,000,000).

11. Spelling out percent is preferred, although % may be used if space is needed or in graphs or charts. Use numerals in front of percent, unless starting a sentence.

About 40 percent of the students responded.
One percent of the faculty attended.

12. Dates:

Spell out all days of the week and months. Use numerals for years. Use no punctuation if listing just the month and the year, but set the year off with commas if using the day of the month.

May 2014
August 12, 2016
a February 5, 2014, deadline
Join us Wednesday, October 17, for a celebration.

Do not use ‘th’ or ‘st’ for dates.

May 10, not May 10th

Decades are to be referred to as the *1990s, 2000s*, etc.

Capitalization

1. Academic courses

Capitalize the main words in titles of specific courses, but not names used in a general sense.

Economics 200; Science 111; economics courses; sociology

Capitalize all nouns and adjectives referring to languages, countries and nationalities.
a French course; an English course

2. Academic departments or areas

All formal and informal references to specific departments and administrative offices should be capitalized.

The Office of Student Life or Student Life

The Office of Financial Aid or Financial Aid

Students are advised to meet with someone in Financial Aid to get help with the FAFSA.

Do not capitalize “financial aid” in a sentence when used generically.

There are several financial aid options available to students, including grants and scholarships.

3. Administrative department or offices

Capitalize the name of the department and the word “department” or “office” only when using the official name.

Department of Marketing and Public Relations

Marketing and Public Relations department

4. Assurance Argument

Refer to the Assurance Argument as “the Assurance Argument,” always capitalized.

The completed Assurance Argument will certainly meet expectations.

5. Board of Trustees (COTC)

Capitalize Board of Trustees when referring to COTC or another college’s board of trustees. Do not capitalize “board” or “trustees” when used alone.

The Central Ohio Technical College Board of Trustees

COTC board member

6. Campuses

Capitalize when using the formal name of the campus, but do not capitalize the word campuses when listing multiples:

Newark Campus, Knox Campus, Coshocton Campus or Pataskala Campus

Knox and Coshocton campuses

7. College/university

The word “college” should be lowercase when it is used alone in reference to Central Ohio Technical College or another specific institution.

Many students attend Central Ohio Technical College because the college is so close to home.

The word “university” should be lowercase when it is used alone in reference to Ohio State

Newark or another specific institution.

Many students want to attend Ohio State Newark, although the university is far from home.

8. Degrees

Capitalize the main words in the names of degrees when they are spelled out and capitalize abbreviations of degrees. Abbreviation of the degree name is acceptable on first reference. Do not use periods in the abbreviation of degrees.

Bachelor of Arts - BA

Bachelor of Science - BS

Master of Arts - MA

Master of Science - MS

Doctor of Philosophy - PhD

Capitalization of names of degrees should match the registrar's official degree list. If the official degree name contains the words "of Science", the discipline is capitalized. (Refer to the Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, not the Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry or the Bachelor's degree in Chemistry.) Similar rules apply to references made to master's and doctoral degrees.

Do not capitalize academic degrees used in a general sense. Note that bachelor's and master's end in 's.

an associate degree

a bachelor's degree

a master's degree

a doctoral degree or a doctorate

In references to degrees, the word degree is not capitalized.

They each earned a Master of Music degree or MA in music.

Make plural abbreviations of degrees by adding s.

MA's; PhD's; JD's

Capitalize names or abbreviations of academic degrees and honors following a personal name.

Jim Smith, Doctor of Law

Susan Brown, MD

James Trillburn, Woodrow Wilson Fellow

When they follow a person's name, qualifiers such as PhD and MD are preceded by a comma. A second comma follows the qualifier in running text.

William Turner, PhD

The latest article published by William Turner, PhD, was his third in six months.

9. Job Titles

Capitalize anytime a specific job title is referenced.

Kim Manno, Director of Advancement

Director of Advancement Kim Manno

When preparing lists of faculty names with titles, spell out the titles unless the list is long and space is at a premium.

10. President

First reference: *President John M. Berry, PhD*

Subsequent reference: *Dr. Berry or the President*

Any specific reference to COTC's President should be capitalized
the President of Central Ohio Technical College

Lowercase when not used as a formal/specific title.

A college president has many responsibilities.

11. Semesters and seasons

Only specific seasons and semesters should be capitalized.

Spring Semester 2015 should be capitalized

a spring semester should not be capitalized

Punctuation

1. Bulleted lists

Keep punctuation for bulleted lists at a minimum. Begin each item with a capital letter.

Omit periods after items unless one or more of the items is a complete sentence.

The required curriculum includes:

- *A calculus course*
- *An advanced physics course*
- *Three chemistry courses*

Ordinarily, commas are not used following a series of items. If the vertically listed items are phrases—especially long phrases—that grammatically complete the sentence containing them, commas may, but need not, be used. If commas are used, the last item is followed by a period.

2. Campus's

campus's (The campus's growth ...)

Singular common nouns ending in s, use 's unless the next word begins with s:

the witness's answer, the witness' story

3. Commas/Semicolons

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the

conjunction in a simple series. Use serial commas only to prevent confusion. Use a

comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases, for instance if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction.

Apples, bananas, grapes and oranges

Biology, Chemistry, and Anatomy and Physiology

Use a semicolon to separate items in a list only if each element in the list contains a comma.

We have a son, John; a daughter, Jane; and a dog, Spot.

4. Hyphenate

Hyphenate as an adjective before the noun; otherwise use two words.

full time/full-time; part time/part-time

They are full-time workers.

They work full time in the office.

For assistance with grammar and/or mechanics not addressed here, refer to the Style Guide offered by the Marketing and Public Relations Office.