

KENNEDY LIBRARY COMMUNICATIONS

A communications handbook for staff,
faculty and students.

Please contact lib-com@calpoly.edu

Last revised 9/2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Overview	3
Out Loud	
Blog Post Guidelines	7
Social Media	
Facebook	13
Posting	13
Guiding Questions	14
Style Considerations	16
Consistent Identity	16
How to respond to	16
Twitter	21
Hashtags	21
Examples	21
Live Tweeting	21
Photos	22
Useful Information	22
GoodReads	22
Flickr	
Planning a Photo Shoot	25
Shooting Tips	28
Post Production	28
Uploading	28
Vimeo	30
Soundcloud	32
Goodreads	33
Press Communication	
Initial Contact	37
Before an Interview	39
Alert	39
Prepare	40
How to Talk	41
Forwarding	41
Cal Poly Style Guide	43

We can help you reach your audience with an effective message.

Here are some helpful tips as you think about your needs.

1. START EARLY.

The earlier you get us involved, the more we can help. If you're starting a project that may need our support, come talk to us right away. We can talk through your needs and plan an effective strategy.

2. PREPARE.

We'll want to know who your audience is, what need or opportunity is being met and your expected timeframe. Think through these questions in preparing to talk to us.

3. FOCUS ON GOALS, NOT VEHICLES.

Let us help you formulate the best approach. Deciding on specifics too early can limit potentially creative conversations about the best strategy for your situation. Bring us your needs and ideas — together we'll find the right solutions.

** With thanks and credit to UCOP Communications.*

OVERVIEW



lib.calpoly.edu/outloud



facebook.com/KennedyLibrary
facebook.com/calpolysciencecafe



twitter.com/REKLibrary



flickr.com/photos/kennedylibrary



vimeo.com/kennedylibrary



soundcloud.com/kennedy-library



goodreads.com/kennedylibrary



OUT LOUD

OUT LOUD

We welcome contributors to the Out Loud blog! If you'd like to write a post or become a regular contributor, please contact Karen Lauritsen (67549). Faculty, staff and students are welcome. Please read the blog for a sense of the space.

Blog Post Guidelines

In general, posts are best when they follow these guidelines:

- 200-400 words
- First person voice
- Short paragraphs; break up with section headers (Please use "Header 2" from dropdown)
- Titles and section headers are in standard case: "Kennedy Library welcomes live mustang," not "Kennedy Library Welcomes Live Mustang."

Please configure your post's featured photo for 2,500x500px and save for "Web and Media."

Insert line break after first 1-2 sentences for front-page appearance.

Posts may be edited for consistency and grammar.

To display your full name next to your article, go to the Wordpress dashboard, click '**Edit Your Profile**', then change the '**Display name publicly as**' dropdown to your full name (first then last), rather than the default selection of your username. You will only have to do this once.

Your article **has** to have at least 2 selected categories, and **no more** than 5. One **must** be "Out Loud" or else your post won't show up on the blog. The second category **must** be a subcategory of "Out Loud". You can tell if it a subcategory if the name is indented below the "Out Loud" checkbox. All extra categories must be "Out Loud" subcategories as well.

If you want to add a new subcategory, the parent category **must** be "Out Loud". This is the only way the new category will show up on the blog's main page.

There are 2 choices for how to display your featured image: tiled or filled. Filled featured images are for displaying people or serious events, and they **must** have an aspect ratio of width:10, height:4, and the width must be greater than or equal to 700px. Tiled featured images are more lighthearted and fun, and they do not require a designated aspect ratio/image size.



SOCIAL MEDIA

MISSION/GOAL

Our aim is to build a supportive and welcoming academic community.

Our presence on social media is inclusive and informative.

Our primary audiences are students, faculty and the Cal Poly community.

All that said, we also want to have:



FACEBOOK

Here are guidelines for how to communicate on our social media. Since we have several channels and several people communicating through those channels, these guidelines are designed to create a unified library voice. (Campus standards are being developed.)

Posting

A balance between posts about us and what we do (promotional, for example a librarian receives an award) and about students (services) is good to maintain, also. Primarily, posts are best when focused on what we offer Cal Poly.

These guidelines are for all social media channels, but particularly Facebook and Twitter.

Voice

Friendly, short, specific messages work well. Questions that encourage response usually result in more interaction. Yet, while we want to be conversational, please maintain a slightly detached, “adult” voice.

Photos

Photos are a fan favorite. Please remember people who appear in our photos need to sign releases, with the exception of photos taken at public events.

Guiding Questions

It may be useful to ask yourself guiding questions when considering a post:

Does it support academic success?

Since we're an academic library we want to emphasize what we do to support student and faculty success. There is a lot to choose from! For example: Services, teaching, public programs, talks in the Data Studio, exhibit openings, special collections, tutoring, facilities updates, videos, podcasts, blog posts... We also post service announcements for library partners. Use a library link, when possible.

Is this useful information?

Please post facilities updates, service reminders and exceptional circumstances. For example, if Internet access is interrupted, let people know we're working on it. Please be sure to share only well-researched information you know to be true by confirming it with your supervisor or member of the XTeam.

Who else may care about this?

Posting library events, exhibits and information (for example, about the design work for Banned Books Week) to related sites can help get the word out. It's best to word the messages as an enthusiastic offer with a link, depending on the sharing guidelines of the site you're sharing to.

Who asked me to post?

Typically, we stick to sharing library information. As a way to remain impartial and neutral, we usually don't share campus, athletic or college events and information. That said, sometimes the XTeam will request messages to support outside programs based on an agreement with that program or event.



Robert E. Kennedy Library, Cal Poly

November 8, 2012

Happening now! Michael Newton, co-founder of Guayaki Yerba Mate and a Cal Poly alum is here near Julian's.



Like · Comment · Share

👍 11 💬 5 📄 1

👍 11 people like this.



Ryan McLeod Tell him to get Guayaki fruit teas back in Campus Market, campus dining, and the vending machines and at Julian's!

It used to be one of the only things I'd buy on campus...
November 8, 2012 at 4:28pm · Like



Robert E. Kennedy Library, Cal Poly We can pass it on, Ryan!

November 8, 2012 at 4:29pm · Like



Ryan McLeod Much appreciated, thanks 😊

November 8, 2012 at 4:30pm · Edited · Like



Austin Zuffi doooooodes i wanna be there. is he still there?

November 8, 2012 at 7:38pm · Like



Robert E. Kennedy Library, Cal Poly We hope you were able to make it, Austin!

November 9, 2012 at 6:18am · Like · 🍻 1

Style considerations

Voice

Use the collective “we” when referring to the library rather than the first person. However, the emphasis is on the user. For example, in a post we’d emphasize that it’s “at your library” not “at our library.” The students, faculty and community we’re talking with are primary.

Grammar

Use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some abbreviation is okay, especially on Twitter. If you use library in a sentence it’s lowercase unless preceded by Kennedy. Avoid slang and questionable language (including from sources and links). Locations are lowercase unless named.

Examples

We’re happy to see so many of you in the atrium on this beautiful day!

Join us in the Data Studio (111C) for COSAM tutoring from 9-11am.

We love that you love your library! (not: We love that you love your Library!)

We love that you love Kennedy Library!

Consistent identity

We are Robert E. Kennedy Library or Kennedy Library.
We are **not** REKL or Cal Poly Library or other variations.

Emoticons: Use sparingly.

Outside links: Outside links are usually shared only when related to an approved message. For example, we shared Drop, Cover, Hold! information because the campus was participating in the Great Shakeout and the XTeam requested related messaging.

How to respond to...

Negative comments from users

Our community self-monitors very well. We don’t delete comments unless they can be considered hate speech or excessive language, which is rare. If you have questions about a comment, please consult with Karen or the XTeam.



Robert E. Kennedy Library, Cal Poly

June 29, 2012

These are the new, cushy chairs that welcome you on the top floors! They're replacing the ones that were less comfy...



Like · Comment · Share

👍 20 💬 5

👍 Jordan Hooper, Jennifer Ray, Daniel Pastrich and 17 others like this.



Ruben Custodio I'm glad I graduated in time to not use these chairs...

June 29, 2012 at 10:01am · Like · 🔄 3



Devon Itspapaguhcuh Guerrero i heard years ago there used to be more couches

June 29, 2012 at 10:05am · Like



Angelina Sailors Those do not look cushy!!! Those look like the ones they have in the dorms. Minus the fun part with the rocker on the end.

June 29, 2012 at 10:05am · Like · 🔄 1



Robert E. Kennedy Library, Cal Poly Try them out next time you're here! They're soft, really. We hope you'll find them an improvement.

June 29, 2012 at 10:08am · Like · 🔄 2



Angelina Sailors Oh, I will!

June 29, 2012 at 10:09am · Like

Feedback about our services

If it is feedback about our services or facilities that could be considered negative, it's an opportunity to address the issue in a timely way. Preferably in the same business day or within 24 hours, research the issue with the supervisor in the know. For example, if outlets aren't working, please check in with Dale about what would be an accurately worded post.

Sometimes, depending on the tone of the comment, we wait to reply or (rarely) don't reply. Often, other users will reply and engage. An example of this was when we posted about cash prizes for the student video competition. A user commented that it wasn't a good use of money (as they were voting on the student success fee). Another student replied that it was from other funds.

We can step out of the way and be a place where people speak freely with one another.

TWITTER

Twitter is primarily used to promote upcoming library events, document those events, share library information and promote Goodreads.

Hashtags

Events have hashtags (#cpauthors #cpscicafe #cpexhibits)

Examples

Examples of how we've promoted the library's upcoming events, exhibits (and outside programs as directed by XTeam).



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

16 Oct

Oct 18, at 10:18am be ready to DROP,COVER&HOLD cause the library is a part of the Great California Shakeout,#IFeelTheEarthMoveUnderMyFeet

Expand



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

16 Oct

Join us 10/18/12 for Science Cafe "On Foot". 11am-12:30 #cpscicafe #onfoot

Expand

Live Tweeting

Live Tweeting events creates a snapshot of the event by highlighting quotes, memorable moments. We will also be able to retweet our follower's tweets on the event. This is a great way to extend the conversation and keep a record.



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

18 Oct

Emotional attachment is a big part when designing public spaces. Encourage people to be physically active! #cpscicafe

Expand



Victoria Billings @vibills

18 Oct

"Physical activity is the magic medicine"-Kinesiology prof Heather Starnes #cpscicafe

Retweeted by Kennedy Library

Expand

Photos

Photos are great!



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

18 Oct

Standing room only at science cafe today! pic.twitter.com/GXeTAt0p

Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite More



Useful Information

Useful for informational purposes such as hour changes, Internet disruption, etc. (#REKnews)



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

12 Nov

Campus is closed but the library will be open today from 10am-2am. Happy Veterans day.

[Expand](#)



The CSU @calstate

12 Nov

All 23 campuses & the Chancellor's Office will be closed to honor the service of our nation's veterans today. ow.ly/fdNJv

Retweeted by Kennedy Library

GoodReads

Promoting "GoodReads" collection (#reading)

Highlight "Currently Reading" books from GoodReads. This will promote the goodreads.com account as well as the collection.



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

8 Oct

I'm #reading The Casual Vacancy by J.K. Rowling. bit.ly/R9Yp4j

Collapse Reply Retweet Favorite More

Help students find their next read by communicating with them and providing suggestions



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

14 Oct

reading book reviews and I am surprised that vampire fic is still popular. I am ready for a new trend! What's your favorite vampire novel?

Collapse Reply Retweet Favorite More

1:00 PM - 14 Oct 12 · Details

Reply to @REKLibrary



Kristen Thorp @GingerReads

14 Oct

@REKLibrary Vampire Academy series by Richelle Mead

Expand



Victoria Billings @vibills

14 Oct

@REKLibrary Let's make mermaids a lit trend. Or witches.

Expand



Kennedy Library @REKLibrary

14 Oct

@vibills MERMAIDS! Here is a list from goodreads.com on the best mermaid book...Happy Reading!! goodreads.com/list/show/7878...

Expand

FLICKR

Planning a Photo Shoot

Each photo shoot should have a basic “Shot List” indicating the essential shots. The event coordinator should review the Shot List with the photographer and make sure that these shots are captured as a minimum.

Photographers, please note that any images posted to Kennedy Library’s Flickr become property of Kennedy Library.

Talk or Discussion Panel Event (Example: Cal Poly Authors)

3-4 Presenter groups shots (Landscape)

3-4 Individual shots of presenters in action (Portrait & Landscape)

3-4 Q&A shots of audience (Portrait & Landscape)



Presentation & Workgroup Event (Example: Science Cafe)

3-4 Presenter groups shots (Landscape)

3-4 Individual shots of presenters in action (Portrait & Landscape)

5-10 Various group activity shots (Landscape)

3-4 Q&A shots of audience (Portrait & Landscape)



Other important checklist items:

- Make sure batteries are charged and memory card has sufficient storage capacity
- Check camera settings for appropriate white balance (e.g., sunlight, tungsten, etc.)
- Check that camera is set to highest resolution setting
- Make sure you have Photo Release forms with you to use whenever appropriate

Photo Release

We need a signed Photo Release for all non-public event shots. For example, if taking a photo of a student studying, you must 1) Ask first and 2) Get a signed release. You don't need the audience at a Science Café to sign releases, since it's a public gathering.

Give signed releases to Administration.

Find this form on the wiki: bit.ly/cp_release

Personal Image and Voice Release Agreement

I, _____ hereby
release to California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo
(University), the use of my image and/or voice described herein:

for use and reproduction by the University for representation, publicity,
and/or promotional purposes.

Such release is made without consideration beyond acknowledgement by
the University of this release agreement.

This release agreement is intended to discharge the State of California,
Trustees of the California State University, California Polytechnic State
University, officers, employees, students and volunteers of each from and
against any and all liability arising out of or connected in any way with this
release even though that liability may arise out of the negligence or careles-
sness on the part of persons or agencies mentioned above.

I understand that institutional data (including images and voice) may be
protected under state and/or federal privacy acts (including but not limited
to the Family Educational rights and Privacy Act), nevertheless, I agree to
assume the risks of authorizing the University to use my image and release
and hold harmless any of the persons or agencies mentioned above who
(through negligence or carelessness) might otherwise be liable to me (or my
heirs or assigns) for damages. It is further understood and agreed that this
Release Agreement is to be binding on my heirs and assigns.

I have read this entire Release Agreement and I fully understand and agree
to be legally bound by it.

This is a release of your rights. Read Carefully before signing.

Releasor's Signature _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Shooting Tips

The library interior is not an ideal environment for taking photographs. A few things to keep in mind:

- Avoid shots that point to exterior windows
- Faces and fronts are generally better than backs
- Avoid shots of people eating
- Avoid shots from below the subject
- Avoid squints and blinks

Post Production

Editing photos should be kept to the basics: cropping and minor color correction. (Photoshop's Auto Color usually does a great job.)

Always work on, and upload, the highest resolution image.

Uploading

Upload photos corresponding to the Shot List, and a few additional creative shots. In general, we want to select and upload a few of the highest quality shots.

Make use of Flickr's batch uploading features to name, tag, and categorize photos. (Flickr can also adjust rotation on images.)

If you have any doubt about an uploaded photo, set it to private and review with someone in the Communications Group.

Tags

Please use the following standard tags wherever appropriate. As a general rule, use additional tags to further describe more detail about the photo. More tags are good! (Some of these tags may be most relevant for our internal use.)

- Robert E. Kennedy Library
- [Library Dept.]
- [Event Name]
- Atrium
- Books
- Fishbowls
- Whiteboards
- Student
- Staff
- Faculty
- Campus Partner

- Cal Poly
- San Luis Obispo
- Gallery

Sets and Collections

Sets contain related photos. **Collections** contain Sets and/or other Collections.

The following 4 top-level Collections have been established to simplify navigation:

- Events
- Exhibits
- Library Building
- Campus

Create additional Sets or Collections under these 4 Collections.

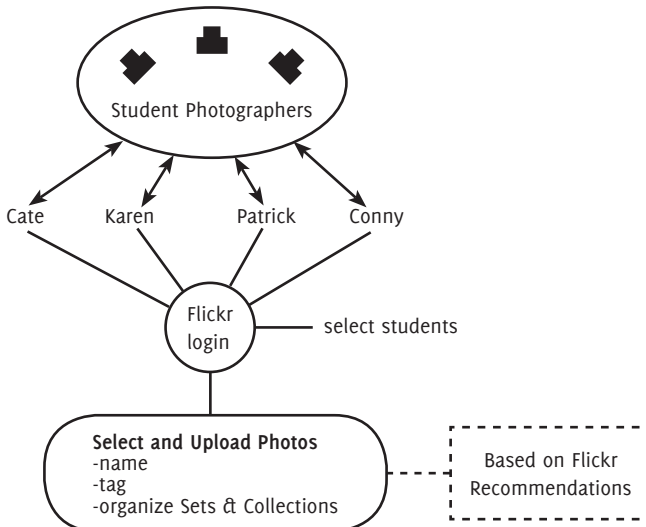
Image Naming and Descriptions

Always name images with some descriptive wording. Never leave the image name as the default camera name (e.g., IMG_0233).

Image descriptions should be created whenever names and tags will not sufficiently describe the photo.

Flickr Account

Change Admin password once a year.



Kennedy Library is on *Vimeo*. Obviously, in this space the primary communication is via video. The videos, their brief descriptions and metadata are also posted to Cal Poly YouTube.

The screenshot shows the Vimeo profile page for Robert E. Kennedy Library. At the top, the Vimeo logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Join', 'Log In', 'Create', 'Watch', and 'Upload' are in the center. A search bar is on the right. The profile header features a video thumbnail of three men holding a large check from Cal Poly for \$2,000, with the name 'Darryl Eugene Williams II' and the amount '\$2,000' visible. The profile name 'Robert E. Kennedy Library' is followed by a 'PLUS' badge. Below the name, it says 'Joined 2 years ago / Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA' and 'Robert E. Kennedy Library is at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.' A text block invites users to watch a video titled 'Why We Love Our Library' and provides the URL 'vimeo.com/38993818'. There are 'Follow' and 'Send Message' buttons. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'Recently Uploaded' with three video thumbnails and titles, 'BROWSE & CONNECT' with statistics for videos, channels, and albums, 'ON THE WEB' with a list of external links, 'Recently Followed' with a message that no one has been followed, and 'Recent Activity' with two activity items showing likes and video views.

vimeo Join Log In Create Watch Upload Search

Robert E. Kennedy Library PLUS
Joined 2 years ago / Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA
Robert E. Kennedy Library is at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.
Watch our winning student video, Why We Love Our Library, to learn more about us:
vimeo.com/38993818

Follow Send Message

Recently Uploaded

Pyroprints! Fingerprinting Bacteria
19 hours ago

Installation: Learning is Infectious (space)
2 weeks ago

Installation: Learning is Infectious (color)
1 month ago

On Foot! Community Design and Public H...
2 months ago

BROWSE & CONNECT

45 Videos
4 Channels
1 Album

ON THE WEB

- Robert E. Kennedy Library - Where it all happens
- Out Loud - Curated collection of our media content
- Kennedy Library on Flickr - Delightful photos from life at the library

NEED HELP?

If you have questions about what's on this page, look here first: [Help](#) [FAQ](#)

[Robert E. Kennedy Library's Videos](#)
[Robert E. Kennedy Library's Likes](#)

Recently Followed

Robert E. Kennedy Library has not followed anyone yet.

Recent Activity

all by Robert E. Kennedy Library / on Robert E. Kennedy Library

2 weeks ago
jose pedrerros prado liked Woodcut artist Tom Killion explains process by Robert E. Kennedy Library

1 month ago
Ryan liked Installation: Learning is Infectious (color) by Robert E. Kennedy Library

To Video or Not To Video

There are a few important questions to ask and answer when considering the creation of video content:

1. Would the content be less meaningful if it were in another form?

We want to be sure we're adding value to the content for our audience. If they can understand something more quickly or clearly in video, then it may be a good choice.

2. Would it be more engaging as a video?

For example, an interview may be more engaging on screen than transcribed in print. Or, describing a complex process may be too dry or difficult to understand without the benefit of video.

3. Who is this for? Who will care about this content?

Sometimes the intended audience isn't large enough to justify the time and resources required to produce a video. We must be careful not to produce a video just because we can.

4. How are we going to share this video?

Our social media channels are a good start. It's also very helpful to know which communities may be most interested in the content. For example, do we know collaborators or learning communities who would want to share this content?

SOUNDCLOUD

Kennedy Library shares podcasts of their events and programs on SoundCloud, a social audio site.

The screenshot shows the SoundCloud profile for Kennedy Library Cal Poly. The profile includes a header with 'Stream' and 'Explore' buttons, a search bar, and a profile picture of the library building. The profile name is 'Kennedy Library Cal Poly' with the location 'San Luis Obispo, United States'. It shows 5 followers and 31 tracks. A 'Follow' button is visible. Below the profile information are social media links for Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Flickr, and Blog, along with the text 'Block Kennedy Library Cal Poly'. The main content area is titled 'Spotlight' and features a list of audio tracks:

- DATA STUDIO presents** Kennedy Library Cal Poly **Anne Kelly Knowles: Visualizing History with GIS** (6 months, #History, 19:00)
- DATA STUDIO presents** Kennedy Library Cal Poly **Data Management: Who Knew It Could Be A Hot Topic?** (8 months, #DataStudio, 40:37)
- CONVERSATIONS CAL POLY AUTHORS** Kennedy Library Cal Poly **BDSM in American Science Fiction and Fantasy** (8 months, #sciencefiction, 57:43)
- I'M WITH THE BANNED** Kennedy Library Cal Poly **War... what is it good for?** (1 year, #Liberation, 20:14)

GOODREADS

Kennedy Library is on Goodreads. All readers in the library are welcome to submit reviews to be posted to Goodreads.

goodreads [Home](#) [My Books](#) [Friends](#) [Recommendations](#) [Explore](#) [register](#) [tour](#) [sign in](#)

Robert E. Kennedy Library's Profile



107 ratings (3.32 avg)
172 reviews

Sign in to Goodreads to learn more about Robert E. .

[sign in >](#)

<http://www.lib.sulpoly.edu>

<http://www.goodreads.com/KennedyLibrary>

[add as a friend](#)

[follow reviews](#)

[send message](#) | [compare books](#)

Robert E.'s new-january-2013 shelf



More...

Robert E.'s Bookshelves

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| read (111) | new-january-2013 (30) | lights-camera-action (3) | law-and-order (1) |
| currently-reading (1) | new-november-2012 (20) | romance (3) | pop-books (1) |
| to-read (152) | new-february-2013 (17) | lol (3) | graphic-novels (0) |
| banned-books (56) | young-adult (12) | subversive-lit (2) | blinded-me-with-science (0) |
| new-october-2012 (50) | new-december-2012 (4) | dragons-warlocks-and-que | books-i-couldn-t-finish (0) |
| new-september-2012 (32) | the-world-around-us (4) | books-about-books (1) | |

[Cloud](#) | [Stats](#) | [More...](#)

Robert E. is Currently Reading



Robert E. Kennedy Library is currently reading:
Alice in Zombieland (The White Rabbit Chronicles, #1)
by Gena Showalter (Goodreads Author)
bookshelves: [currently-reading](#)
Jan 08, 2013 02:40pm

[Want to Read](#)

Rate this book
☆☆☆☆☆

Robert E.'s Recent Updates

Robert E. Kennedy Library marked as to-read:



Through the Ever Night (Under the Never Sky, #2)
by Veronica Rossi (Goodreads Author)

[Want to Read](#)

Rate this book
☆☆☆☆☆

Find this book at Kennedy Library

Feb 04, 2013 12:44pm · [see review](#)

Robert E. Kennedy Library marked as to-read:



Confessions of a Murder Suspect
by James Patterson (Goodreads Author)

[Want to Read](#)

Rate this book
☆☆☆☆☆

Find this book at Kennedy Library

Feb 04, 2013 12:33pm · [see review](#)

Robert E. Kennedy Library marked as to-read:



Schroder: A Novel
by Amity Gaige

[Want to Read](#)

Rate this book
☆☆☆☆☆

Find this book at Kennedy Library

Enter for a chance to win a copy!
[Start reading >](#)

Robert E.'s Friends (17)



Kristen Thorp
502 books | 62 friends



Jan
216 books | 11 friends



Valerie
145 books | 23 friends



Blues Chick
496 books | 14 friends



Grace
195 books | 3 friends



Maggie
130 books | 28 friends



Danny McCaffrey
587 books | 20 friends



Michele
589 books | 47 friends

[More friends...](#)

2 people are following Robert E.

sponsored books



If I Loved You
Readers Say: "One twist after another." "Heartwarming tenderness and Passionate love scenes." "I love the storyline."
"She made me a fan."
www.goodreads.com
[view 10 reviews >](#)



Subway Noise
Is this a simple graphic novel?
Or is it too difficult to follow?



**PRESS
COMMUNICATION**

INITIAL CONTACT

Today you've been contacted by a reporter via phone, email or in-person. What do you do? These media guidelines are meant to be a helpful how-to on how to handle a request for comment.

Interviews are often an opportunity to share our strategic messaging with important audiences both on and off campus.

Planning for what you want to say can make a big difference in the resulting write up or interview. It can also help to role-play or talk it out, which I'm happy to do.

Since we don't get the chance to review stories before they go public (so that we can clarify a misunderstanding, for example), the best we can do is prepare well.

Please contact Karen Lauritsen with questions.

Initial Contact

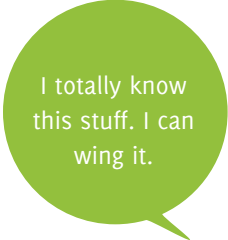
First, let's imagine that you've been contacted by a reporter via phone, email or in-person. A timely response is important (within the day, if possible).

Here's what you can say: "Thank you for your interest. Please give me your contact information and the best person to talk to about this will get back to you today." Even if the most appropriate person to talk to the reporter is you, this will allow time for the next steps. Please assure the reporter we will get back to them.

BEFORE AN INTERVIEW

Before you give an interview, alert others and prepare.

Alert



I totally know this stuff. I can wing it.

When you're intimately involved with a project, you may be tempted to wing it because you know it inside and out. However, that can result in giving a lot of detail (exposition) rather than a focused message.



Who should know I've been contacted by a reporter?

Your supervisor. We may need to let certain people know in advance of a story.



Who is the appropriate contact for the reporter?

We all like to offer helpful information! However, sometimes someone else may be a better contact because they may be more familiar with the issue or can offer greater context. Please ask your supervisor before talking to a reporter.

If camera crews are requesting access to the library, please notify Administration.

Prepare

Who needs to be acknowledged when I talk to the reporter?

We do a lot of awesome stuff together. It can be easy to forget to recognize the team of people who helped make it happen. A list may help, with specific information about who did what.

What key messages do I want to share about the library /this project?

Depending on what outlet you're talking to and who their primary audience is, the message may shift. During the interview, there may be an opportunity to speak specifically to how the library is supporting the campus and certain Cal Poly strategic imperatives.

Most likely you'll only get the chance to say one or two things, so it's important to prioritize messages. It's helpful to develop three sound bites that you want to say. You don't have to figure those out on your own!

What popular questions can I anticipate and what are my responses?

Think about the 5Ws (who, what, where, when, why) and how. The "why" is likely the opportunity for you to communicate key messages.

It's very possible that a reporter may not ask a question you want to answer, which is another reason to consider what you'd like to say in advance. You may be able to offer that information even if the question isn't asked. For example, "I can't speak to X, but I can tell you Y."

How to Talk

Talking in short sentences means less opportunity for misinterpretation or fragmentation of what you intended to say.

Reporters sometimes lead with the **most interesting rather than the most important** (which are often different things and are subjective to begin with). It can be helpful to keep that in mind when considering both what to share and how to frame it. Something you say offhand may end up being the lead to the story.

Forwarding

Finally, some matters are best left to Public Affairs or Cal Poly Police. If there is an emergency or crisis situation, they are likely the best contacts for the press. Simply say, "I can't comment on that. Please speak to someone in Administration in room 204."

CAL POLY STYLE GUIDE

This is the Cal Poly Style Guide, produced by the Office of Public Affairs.

The Cal Poly Public Affairs office uses as its primary reference the Associated Press Stylebook. Following are some common AP Stylebook guidelines, as well as some exceptions that the Public Affairs office has adopted for

use in university publications and documents. Also included are some words and phrases specific to Cal Poly and the California State University. (For invitations, development/advancement communications, posters and postcards many of these rules are relaxed.)

abbreviations

Generally avoid abbreviations. Do not abbreviate days of the week. Abbreviate “junior” and “senior” after an individual’s name. Abbreviate the words “corporation,” “company,” “incorporated,” “limited,” etc., when used after a corporate identify. Ex: Ford Motor Co. Spell out when it occurs elsewhere in a name: the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Generally follow spelling and capitalization preferred by the company.

Ex: eBay, but capitalize the first letter if it begins a sentence. Do not use all capital letters unless the letters are pronounced individually: IBM, BMW.

academic degrees / Dr. / Ph.D.

If mention of degrees is necessary to establish someone’s credentials, the preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase such as: Bill Spencer, who has a doctorate in psychology. “Dr.” can be used on first reference; however, use only the last name on all subsequent references.

Exception: If a person is mentioned early on in a very long document as “Professor Jack Smith,” and the reader might have difficulty recalling who Smith was in a second reference that appears much later, you can use some identifying language, such as “History Professor Smith.”

Acceptable: Bachelor of Science degree, Bachelor of Arts degree, bachelor’s degree; Master of Science degree, master’s degree, Master of Business Administration; Master of Fine Arts degree; doctorate, doctoral or Ph.D.; Ed.D. Also, an associate degree (no possessive, lowercase). Use abbreviations such as B.S., B.A., M.S., MBA and MFA only when the need to identify many individuals by degree on first reference would make the preferred form cumbersome. People earn a degree; they don’t receive one. They can “hold” or “have” a degree.

academic departments

Department names should appear as they are listed in the current Cal Poly Catalog. Ex: Art and Design Department (not Department of Art and Design). If unsure, go to: <http://www.catalog.calpoly.edu/>. The Orfalea College of Business has “areas” not departments. Areas should be listed as: Business Administration area, Economics area, Industrial Technology area.

In a departure from AP Stylebook guidelines, capitalize department and actual program names.

Ex: History Department, Women’s Engineering Program. The word “program” is not capitalized unless it is part of the proper name. Ex: Wine and Viticulture program.

Do not capitalize the word “department” when it stands alone. (See entry under capitalization.)

academic quarters / seasons

Lowercase the names of the academic quarters: spring quarter, summer quarter, fall quarter and winter quarter. Likewise lowercase the names of the seasons.

academic titles

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as chancellor, chair, vice president, etc., when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

Ex: CSU Chancellor Charles Reed appeared before the California Assembly. Marilyn Ernst, chair of the English Department, delivered the keynote address at the annual conference. (Note: The use of chair, as opposed to chairwoman and chairman, is not standard AP style.)

addresses

Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd., St. only with a numbered address. Ex: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number:

Ex: Pennsylvania Avenue

Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name. Ex: Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues. Similar words (alley, drive, road, terrace, etc.) are always spelled out.

(See entry under Cal Poly address for specific university guidelines)

adviser / advisor

Use advisor. (This is a departure from AP.)

alphabetical order

Use alphabetical order when listing a series of equally important names (cities, countries, states, etc.).

Also use alphabetical order when listing people unless there is a hierarchy.

apostrophes

No apostrophes are used in farmers market, Presidents Day and Veterans Day.

Apostrophes are used in place of omitted letters or numbers. Ex: Rock 'n' roll is not dead yet. Many people can vividly recall the '60s. (Note: Do not use an apostrophe when the whole year is used. Many people can vividly recall the 1960s.)

area codes – see entry under telephone numbers.

buildings / room numbers

Use last name only: Ex: Davidson Music Center, Fisher Science Building, Spanos Stadium, Smith Alumni & Conference Center, Cotchett Education Building, Mott Gym

Exception: The Performing Arts Center has its own identity standards, which can be found online at:

http://www.pacslo.org/images/uploads/policies/Identity%20Standards%20Handbook%202009_PC%20Version_Final.pdf

Use capitals for rooms.

Ex: Robert Towne will speak in Room 208 in the Fisher Science Building.

board of directors / board of trustees

Always lowercase.

Cal Poly address (preferred)

Individual's name, department name, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-____ (the entire nine-digit ZIP code the unit has been assigned).

Ex:

*Mary Smith
Distribution Services
1 Grand Ave.
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0122*

(Note: Because the ZIP code is unique, it is not necessary to include the words “Cal Poly” in the address. Cal Poly ZIP codes can be found on the Distribution Services website at <http://www.afd.calpoly.edu/Distribution/zipdept.asp?pid=2>).

Also, department names are required; building names and room numbers are optional.

California State University / CSU

Spell out on first reference: the California State University (upper case “T” in “The” only if it starts a sentence.)

Ex: With its 23 campuses, the California State University is the nation’s largest public university system.

The CSU or CSU can be used in all subsequent references.

campus offices

Do not capitalize the word “office” unless is it part of the actual department name.

Ex: The President’s Office will host an open house Friday from noon to 3 p.m. The Public Affairs office prepares the weekly faculty-staff newsletter, Cal Poly Magazine, and other publications for on- and off-campus constituents.

capitalization

Learn by Doing is capitalized. Do not capitalize “university,” “college” or “department” when they stand alone. Capitalize when used as part of the whole name.

Ex: The program is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts. The college decided to add a major in anthropology.

college

Do not capitalize unless used as part of a formal name. (See above entry on capitalization.)

commas with dates

No comma used with months and year only AND month and day only.

*Ex: January 1972 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month.
His birthday is May 8.*

Note commas in the following usage: Feb. 14, 1987, was the target date. She testified that it was Friday, Dec. 3, when the accident occurred.

commas in a series

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put commas before the conjunction in a simple series. (A simple phrase consists of only one word; a complex phrase consists of several words.)

Ex: The flag is red, white and blue. He would nominate Tom, Dick or Harry.

Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series, if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction: I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.

Use a comma also before the conjunction in a complex series of phrases: The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.

commas in company names

Do not use a comma before Inc. or Ltd.

Ex: Institutional Financial Markets Inc.

course / class names

Capitalize names of course and class offerings.

dash / hyphen

The hyphen (-) is used to indicate continuing or inclusive numbers or time periods. No spaces are used before and after.

Ex: He taught at Cal Poly from 1978-1999. Open House this year will run Friday-Sunday, April 21-23.

The em dash (--) denotes an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause.

Ex: We will fly to Paris in June -- if I get a raise.

Graphic designers will often use one longer line than two short hyphens to depict an em dash. Put a space on both sides of an em dash in all uses except the start of a paragraph.

dates / years

Use Arabic figures without st. , nd, rd or th. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate these months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

Ex: The class will begin Feb. 4, 2012.

Always spell out March, April, May, June, July.

Spell out all months when using alone or with a year alone.

Ex: September is typically the hottest month.

Ex: The university began accepting applications for that major in October 2006.

(Note: When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas.

Ex: Please join us on Friday, Dec. 30, 2011, to celebrate the New Year.

Years – When listing a span of years (2005-11), use the full four-digit number for the first year (before the hyphen) and the just last two digits of ending year.

Ex: He taught at Cal Poly from 2005-11.

(Note: Exception when the dates cover the end of one century and the beginning of another: He taught at Cal Poly from 1997-2011.)

email

No hyphen. (Capitalize “E” if it begins a sentence.) Use hyphen for other e-terms.

Ex: e-book, e-business, e-commerce.

ellipsis (...) In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods together with no spaces, but insert a space before and after, as shown above. Use to indicate deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts and documents.

freelance / freelancer

One word; no hyphen when used as a verb, adjective or noun (freelancer).

fundraising / fundraiser

One word in all cases.

home page

Two words.

Internet

Uppercase. Subsequent references, the Net is acceptable.

Learn by Doing

Uppercase the “L” and “D.” No hyphens.

login, logon, logoff

One word when used as a noun; two words in verb form. Ex: I log in to my computer.

majors / minors / degree programs

Spell out to avoid confusion. (Note: In the past, we used abbreviations, but believe it is helpful to the reader to spell it out.)

Lower case names of majors, minors and degree programs. Ex: Doug Wilamette, an animal science senior, just returned from an internship at Swell Swines in Denver, Colo. Justin Jones earned a master’s degree in electrical engineering.

names / junior / senior

Preferred usage is full name on first reference; last name in subsequent references. Departments and colleges preferring to use first names for a more informal tone, be consistent in that usage throughout publication. Abbreviate Jr. and Sr. only with full names. Do not set off with a comma.

Ex: Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.

nonprofit

One word. For additional rules of prefixes, refer to AP Stylebook.

numbers

Spell out numbers one to nine; use numerals for 10 and over. Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence.

Ex: Three hundreds students signed up for the class.

Use commas with numbers in the thousands.

Ex: 2,568.

Generally, spell out and round off numbers in the millions. 49,850,000 would be approximately 50 million.

Use numerals to denote ages of people. Ex: He is 13 years old. They have a 6-year-old daughter.

over / more than

“Over” refers to spatial relationships:

Ex: The shelf is over the desk.

“More than” refers to numbers or amounts.

Ex: The group raised more than \$10,000. More than 50 people attended the event. NOT: Over 50 people attended.

percent

One word. Do not use the % symbol.

periods

One space -- not two -- after a period between sentences.

quotation marks

If a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotation, do not put close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph. Do, however, put open-quote marks at the start of the second paragraph. Continue in this fashion for succeeding paragraphs, using close-quote marks only at the end of the quoted material.

Quotation marks can be used around a word or words used in an ironical sense. They can also be used on first reference around a word or words that are unfamiliar.

The period and comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

quotation marks in a headline

Use single quotation marks in a headline.

smartphone

One word, lowercase.

states

Spell out the names of the states when they stand alone in text. The names of eight states are never abbreviated:

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. Use the following abbreviations for the others: Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Vt., Va., Wash., W.Va., Wis., Wyo.

Punctuation: Place a comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence or indicating a dateline:

Ex: He was traveling from Nashville, Tenn., to Austin, Texas, en route to his home in Albuquerque, N.M. She said Cook County, Ill., was Mayor Daley's stronghold.

technology references

Internet (uppercase); Web (uppercase); Web page (uppercase, two words); email, online, website, webcam, webcast and webmaster (lowercase, no hyphen, one word).

telephone numbers

Do not use parentheses around area codes. Hyphens are used.

Ex: 805-756-1111.

that / which

Use “that” and “which” when referring to inanimate objects and to animals without names. Use “that” for essential clauses, important to the meaning of a sentence, and without commas.

Ex: I remember the day that we met.

Use “which” for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary, and use commas:

Ex: The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place.

(Tip: If you can drop the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, use “which”; otherwise, use “that.” A “which” clause is surrounded by commas; no commas are used with “that” clauses. Also see the essential clauses, nonessential clauses entry in the AP Stylebook for guidelines on using “that” and “which” to introduce phrases and clauses.)

theater / theatre

Use theater unless the proper name is Theatre.

Ex: Spanos Theatre, the Theatre and Dance Department.

times

Use figures except for “noon” and “midnight.” Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. Do not use “:00” to represent even hours.

Ex. 11 a.m., 3:30 p.m.

(Note: a.m. and p.m. are lowercase, take periods and have no spaces between the letters and the periods.)

titles (quotation marks vs. italics)

Put quotation marks around the names of titles of books, computer games, movies, operas, plays, poems, albums and songs, and lectures, speeches and works of art. No quotation marks are used on references to the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material. In addition do not use quotation marks

or italics for journals, magazines, newspapers, almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks and similar publications.

Also capitalize but do not place in quotes descriptive titles for orchestral works:

Ex: Bach's Suite No. 1 for Orchestra, Beethoven's Serenade for Flute.

Note: If the use of the instrumentation is not part of the title but is added for explanatory purposes, the names of the instruments are lowercased.

Ex: Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in E flat major (the common title) for violin and viola.

Use quotation marks for non-musical terms in a title.

Ex: Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

Use quotation marks for special, full titles:

Ex: "Rhapsody in Blue."

under way

Two words; not underway.

university name

Preferred usage in most instances: Cal Poly (add San Luis Obispo if needed for clarification (include commas before "San Luis Obispo" and after if sentence continues. She attended Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, from 1999-2003.)

Also can use: California Polytechnic State University (with city, if necessary)

Avoid: Cal Poly State University and CPSU

Do not capitalize the word "university" when used alone. (See entry under capitalization.)

Web

Uppercase Web. Lowercase website, webcam, webcast and webmaster. But as a short form and in terms with separate words: the Web, Web page and Web feed.

-wide / wide-

-wide: No hyphen.

Ex: citywide, campuswide, systemwide, statewide, worldwide, industrywide.

wide-: Usually hyphenated.

Ex: wide-angle, wide-open, wide-awake, wide-eyed.

**workbook, workday, workforce, workhorse, workout, workplace,
workstation, workweek**

ZIP code

Use all caps for “ZIP,” which stands for Zoning Improvement Plan. Lowercase the word “code.”

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