

Writing Style Guidelines

For Agenda Items, Presentations, and Official Communications

Formatting Guidelines

Documents should be formatted using Arial 11-point font, including headers and footers. If necessary to fit the content on one page, a minimum of 10 point font is acceptable. Avoid using ALL CAPS, which can imply shouting, except for acronyms and headers.

Use one-inch margins on all sides. To accommodate content, top and/or bottom margins may be reduced to 0.5 inches if needed. Paragraphs should not be indented, and there should be one space between each paragraph.

PowerPoint Guidelines

PowerPoint presentations may be displayed during Board of Regents meetings, printed in the Agenda Book, uploaded to the Board portal, and included in both live and archived webcasts. Institutions and outside vendors may use their own templates but should adhere to the following formatting and content standards.

Use Arial font throughout. Title text should range between 36–44 points, subheadings between 28–36 points, and body text should be no smaller than 22 points. Please use solid colors in charts and graphs rather than patterns. As a tip, test print your presentation in black and white to ensure readability.

Avoid clipart, animations, and logos of non-University or vendor entities. Charts and graphs should be created in Microsoft Excel and pasted into PowerPoint to ensure the best resolution.

PowerPoints must be shared with TSUS by the published deadline to be included in the Board Book. If a presentation will be used during the meeting, it should be submitted at least three days in advance.

Writing Style Guidelines

Before submission, please run a spell check and carefully review each document for grammar, formatting consistency, and clarity. Eliminate fragmented, incomplete, or repetitive sentences.

General Usage

Texas State University System (TSUS)

When mentioning TSUS on first reference, use The Texas State University System (with a lowercase “t” in “the), and TSUS on second reference.

The Board of Regents

Use TSUS Board of Regents whenever possible. Capitalize all references to “Board” or “Regent.”

Regents

Use the Regent’s full title and name on first reference (e.g., *Regent Jane Doe*). On second reference, use the title and last name only (e.g., *Regent Doe*).

Committee Names

Always capitalize the official names of committees (e.g., *Finance and Audit Committee*).

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Spell out terms on first reference, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Use the abbreviation in subsequent references.

Institution Names and Abbreviations

Institution	Abbreviation
Lamar University	Lamar (also LU)
Sam Houston State University	Sam Houston (also SHSU)
Sul Ross State University	Sul Ross (also SRSU)
Texas State University	Texas State (also TXST)
Lamar Institute of Technology	LIT
Lamar State College Orange	LSCO
Lamar State College Port Arthur	LSCPA

Style and Grammar Guidelines

When in doubt, follow the **Chicago Manual of Style**. For questions, contact Malú González at malu.gonzalez@tsus.edu.

Rule	Guideline
Commas	Use a serial comma before “and” or other conjunctions in a list. Example: Regents, Chancellor, and President.
Quotation Marks	Place periods and commas inside quotation marks.
Dates	Write dates as November 16. Do not abbreviate months or use ordinal suffixes (e.g., 16th).
Fiscal Year	Capitalize when referring to a specific year (e.g., Fiscal Year 2025). Use FY for ranges (e.g., FY 2024–2025).
Numbers	Spell out numbers one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above. Spell out million and billion.

Percent	Use the % symbol, rather than spelling out “percent.”
Seasons	Capitalize only when followed by a year (Fall 2025).
Semester	Capitalize only when followed by a year (Fall Semester 2025).
Directions	Capitalize widely known regions (Southeast Texas, West Texas).
Legislature	Capitalize when referring to a specific body (Texas Legislature).
Legislation	Refer to bills as House Bill 1 or Senate Bill 1 (or H.B. 1 / S.B. 1).
State / Federal	Lowercase unless part of a formal name or title.
Institutions	Use “institutions” (lowercase) when referring to TSUS institutions collectively.
University	Capitalize only when referencing a specific TSUS institution.
Chairman	Always capitalize.
Academic Titles	Capitalize when preceding a name (President Smith). Lowercase otherwise.
Academic Departments	Capitalize when using the full proper name (Department of History).
Full Time	Hyphenate when used as an adjective (full-time faculty). Otherwise, use two words.
Internet	Always capitalize.