

How to Write for the USF Website

When you write anything for the USF website, please keep in mind the [USF Guide to Writing](#), the [USF Brand Guide](#), [How to Write a USF News Story](#), [Ban Opinion Adjectives](#), and the [Editorial Style Guide](#). If you don't remember the advice in those five documents, no problem. Please just follow the 10 points below.

Be concise.

(Keep most of your sentences 15 words or shorter. Make all of your paragraphs five sentences or fewer. Cut every word that you don't need.)

No: This course is designed to introduce diverse students to the basic fundamentals of the orienteering practice.

Yes: Learn the elements of orienteering.

Write with nouns and verbs and facts, not with adjectives and adverbs and opinions.

(The reader didn't ask for your opinion.)

No: Thompson's important study boldly centers equity in an incisive interrogation of the robust field of engineering.

Yes: Thompson explores 100 years of inequality in engineering.

Be specific.

(Show more than you tell. Use words that your reader can see, hear, smell, touch, taste, count, or measure.)

No: A period of inclement weather set in.

Yes: It rained for three days straight.

No: The diverse, resilient students were able to be immersed in a vibrant experiential education.

Yes: In two weeks, the 16 students built three tiny homes.

Speak to your reader about your reader.

(At the start of any utterance, please do not speak about you or about USF. The reader does not care.)

No: I am writing to announce . . .

No: The Program in Integral Justice Excellence was established in 2012.

No: In the USF Program in Integral Justice Excellence, we are committed to providing students with . . .

Yes: Imagine waking up to a just world.

In headlines on program pages, name the program.

In your subtitle, don't speak about yourself. Speak to your reader (a prospective student) about the reader.

No:

Encouraging Innovative Excellence

Developing authentic, intentional, creative contributors

YES:

BA Advertising

Change the world with your ideas

In the first paragraph on a program page, speak to your reader about your reader.

(Tell your reader what your reader will do in this program. Use verbs such as "learn" and "create" and "explore." Set USF apart. Add some Jesuit flavor.)

No:

At USF, we are committed to providing diverse students with a passionate, dynamic educational experience. Through a transformative pedagogy that uses experiential learning and innovative ideation, we will set our resilient graduates on vibrant transformational trajectories.

YES:

Understand the present in light of the past. Explore social, cultural, environmental, gender, economic, political, and religious history. Find your future from here.

YES:

Come learn how to open eyes and open minds. Learn how to sell a product, a brand, an idea. Create campaign strategies, media plans, performance analyses, and ads in every medium. Then go forth and persuade the world.

YES:

Study the biological, psychological, social, spiritual, and environmental aspects of health. Prepare for a career in medicine, nursing, public health, health communication, or health informatics.

In the second paragraph on a program page, speak to your reader about your reader's future.

(Tell your reader what your reader may do after graduation. If you can, add some Jesuit flavor.)

No:

At the University of San Francisco we are dedicated to providing students with academic excellence and disruptive, transformative outcomes. Our passionate professors engage our diverse students in daring, dynamic classes that are designed to nurture a lifelong educational experience.

YES:

Come study with professors, not with teaching assistants. Do real-world research in the lab and in the field. Graduate prepared to tackle any job in biology — and inspired to change the world for the better.

YES:

Study global issues, institutions, relations, and economics. Prepare to change the world in government service, education, business, media and communications, environmental sustainability, law, consulting, or development.

YES:

Our graduates work and intern in a range of jobs in a range of fields — public relations, marketing, advertising, social media, television, radio, magazines, human resources, event planning, education, nonprofits, and technology. We've also had graduates start their own businesses and others go on to graduate school in communication, law, public health, strategic communications, and education.

YES:

Discover how words, images, gestures, and symbols reflect and affect human behavior. Explore the many ways that communication can be used — and sometimes abused — to effect change in culture, law, politics, business, and every other realm in which people express themselves. Prepare to succeed in public relations, marketing, advertising, social media, television, radio, magazines, human resources, event planning, education, and technology.

In headlines, be active and specific.

(Use a verb. Say something specific to the story. Give the reader at least a hint of what the story is about.)

No: A New Frontier

No: Against the Odds

No: Transforming Tradition

Yes: **Students Fight Gentrification — and Win**

No: Academic Excellence
No: Awards and Recognition
No: Recognizing Rigor
Yes: USF Shines in New College Rankings
No: Pointing the Way
No: Cura Personalis
No: Transforming Tradition
Yes: New Provost Brings Her Whole Self to the Hilltop

In opening paragraphs on news or feature stories, hook the reader.

(Give the reader the gist of the story — and a reason to care about it. Do not begin with background.)

No:

Founded in 2014, the “Commitment to Change” Academic-Practice Partnership (CCAPP) was developed through the Collaborative-Academic Protocol Alliance (CAPA). This Academic-Practice Partnership included several academic Institutions, the City of Albany’s Department of Integrated Services, and 623 INFO (Information Alliance). For the University of San Francisco School of Integral Excellence (USF SOIE), this Academic-Practice Partnership brings the opportunity not only to be able to serve and educate our future professionals, but it provides an organizational partnership to pursue our collective vision to lead innovative solutions to address inequities using evidence-informed approaches.

Yes:

How does it feel when you have to choose between paying for food and paying for the bus?

Last semester, Isabel Tayag ’22 spent her internship with the South of Market Community Action Network asking MUNI riders about the burdens a proposed fare increase might bring. . . .

Pursue the four USF brand points.

(When you write anything at all, please touch at least one of these points, either by talking about it or by implying it.)

San Francisco Advantage

San Francisco is the global hub of innovation, optimism, progress, and opportunity — and only USF puts you right in the heart of it.

Engaged Learning

At USF we see you, hear you, help you, challenge you. Come roll up your sleeves and learn by doing.

Equipped to Lead and Succeed

Come to USF and develop the professional skills and the cultural awareness you need to succeed in your careers and in your life.

Passion for Justice

True to USF's Jesuit mission, USF students, faculty, staff, and alumni really do change the world for the better. They take their values to work and help make the world more fair, more just, and more livable for more people.

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