

Class Notes Formatting Guidelines

Last Updated May 2024

How to Submit Class Notes

Our preferred method is to submit Class Notes using our online form:

friendsbalt.org/alumni/class-notes/alumni-updates-class-notes

If you have issues with the form, please submit notes in a Word document to alumni@friendsbalt.org.

STYLE

Length

Aim for 750 words or less. Friends School may edit the notes for style and length if needed.

Verb Tenses

Please remember that your notes are published after you write them, so the verb tenses should reflect the publication date, not the date you send them to Friends School.

GRAMMAR + PUNCTUATION

General Tips

- Be succinct and factual. Do not use italics and exclamation points for emphasis unless necessary. Avoid passive voice (use “received,” not “was given”).
- Avoid extra words (use “lives,” not “is living,” or “will visit,” not “writes to let us know that she is going to visit”).
- Try not to write about the same people all the time. Write brief notes about many classmates, rather than lengthy items about only a few people. Please do not include the entire itinerary of a classmate’s trip, for example, but mention the general areas visited.
- Try to avoid too many adjectives (example: “She was thrilled to see beautiful Hawaii,” versus “She was thrilled to see Hawaii,” or “She says Hawaii is beautiful.”).

Numbers

- Spell out whole numbers from one through nine. Use figures for 10 and above.
- Spell out numbers that begin a sentence.
- Use numbers for all ages.

Commas

- Avoid use of serial comma.
- Do not use comma before class year in a name.
- Re. Washington, D.C.: Use a comma before D.C.
- Use commas when identifying ages of children (example: Billy, 9, Mary, 5, and Sam, 1).

Abbreviations

- AP style is used for abbreviating state names (see list).

Periods

- D.C., Ph.D, M.B.A. and B.F.A. get periods.

Capitalization

- Reunion is always capped when referring to the annual School-sponsored alumni gathering.
- Names of subjects/majors are lowercase except if it is Latin, English, Spanish, French...
- Master and bachelor are lowercase, except if referencing a particular field (example: Master of Library Science).
- Grade levels are not capped (example: third grade).
- Do not capitalize professional titles (example: Mary Smith '50 is a regional manager of Smith & Co.).

Punctuation

- Commas and periods go inside of quotation marks; colons and semicolons go outside.
- Periods go inside parentheses when it's a separate, standalone sentence. Periods go outside parentheses when the content inside is not a full sentence. Example: "Alumni Weekend is coming up in May. (If you did not receive an invitation, please the Alumni Office know.)" vs. "Alumni Weekend is coming up soon, so let us know if you did not receive your invitation so we can send another one (and check your address)."
- Do not double (or triple or more) space between sentences. There should only be one space after a period at the end of a sentence.

Quoting Letters

- Your classmates understand that you can only use parts of their letters. You do not need to use three dots to indicate deletion.
- When quoting, use this form: Mary Brown Smith and Jim are "delighted to be included in the event." Do not do this: Mary Brown Smith writes, "Jim and I are delighted to be included in the event."
- When transitioning from your classmate's notes to your own, please be sure it reads as your own note versus an extension of theirs. For example, do not write: "Jim Smith is living in Florida and writes he is loving retirement. I spent the first two weeks of January in Portugal." Instead write "Jim Smith is living in Florida and writes he is loving retirement. As for me, Jane Miller, I spent the first two weeks of January in Portugal."

QUESTIONS?

Contact the Alumni Office at alumni@friendsbalt.org.

THANK YOU!

The Class Notes section of the Friends Magazine is a forum for alumni to learn about one another's activities and to maintain contact with the Friends community. Without you there would be no Class Notes.

AP Style State Abbreviations

Alabama: Ala.
Alaska: AK
Arizona: Ariz.
Arkansas: Ark.
California: Calif.
Colorado: Colo.
Connecticut: Conn.
Delaware: Del.
District of Columbia: D.C.
Florida: Fla.
Georgia: Ga.
Hawaii: Hawaii
Idaho: Idaho
Illinois: Ill.
Indiana: Ind.
Iowa: Iowa
Kansas: Kan.
Kentucky: Ky.
Louisiana: La.
Maine: Maine
Maryland: Md.
Massachusetts: Mass.
Michigan: Mich.
Minnesota: Minn.
Mississippi: Miss.
Missouri: Mo.

Montana: Mont.
Nebraska: Neb.
Nevada: Nev.
New Hampshire: N.H.
New Jersey: N.J.
New Mexico: N.M.
New York: N.Y.
North Carolina: N.C.
North Dakota: N.D.
Ohio: Ohio
Oklahoma: Okla.
Oregon: Ore.
Pennsylvania: Pa.
Rhode Island: R.I.
South Carolina: S.C.
South Dakota: S.D.
Tennessee: Tenn.
Texas: Texas
Utah: Utah
Vermont: Vt.
Virginia: Va.
Washington: Wash.
West Virginia: W.Va.
Wisconsin: Wis.
Wyoming: Wyo.

