BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Education Specialist (Ed.S.)

in Educational Technology

Admissions Guidebook

To ensure consideration for enrollment in …	A _completed_ application is due by…
Fall semester	August 1st
Spring semester	December 1st
Summer semester	April 1st

Please note that there are two rounds of decisions. The first, by the Graduate College, simply indicates that a person is eligible to take graduate courses. Being admitted as a graduate student allows one to take certain classes as a non-degree seeking student. An individual is not admitted into the Educational Technology Ed.S. program, however, until the program coordination team has agreed upon a specific recommendation, which is then communicated to the Graduate College. A letter from the dean will clearly indicate acceptance or denial. Applicants can typically expect a notification of their status in the program (accepted or denied) within three weeks of submitting a completed application.

ADMISSIONS GUIDEBOOK

Updated: JUNE 2016

EDUCATION SPECIALIST (Ed.S.)
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

This guidebook provides applicants with a complete overview of the process and requirements for submitting an application for the Education Specialist (Ed.S.) in Educational Technology.

Non-U.S. Citizens: Please be sure to read the "International Applicants" section.

Table of Contents

NEWS AND UPDATES

As of June 2016, we are now officially accepting application for the EdS program.

Once you have received notification that you have been accepted into the program, you can immediately register for courses.

If you have questions, please contact us at *edtecheds@boisestate.edu*

EdS in EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY
ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

REQUIRED

- A completed master's degree

- A letter of application that shows a strong command of written expression in English

- Non-Native Speakers of English: TOEFL Exam (if applicable, see "International Applicants" section; must be within two years of application deadline date)

    - Paper-based test: 550
    - Paper-based (revised):   213
    - Internet-based test: 80

- Minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for the last half of undergraduate work*

- Minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale for all previous graduate work*

STRONGLY PREFERRED

- A master's degree in education, educational technology, or a closely related field

- Professional experience in educational technology, or in an area of education that emphasizes technology integration or leadership

* There are some exceptions made to undergraduate GPA considerations if the applicant has majored in a STEM field (ex., mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geosciences, engineering, computer science, etc.), if the undergraduate degree was completed before 1990, or if the degree was completed at an institution nationally recognized as historically rigorous.

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

An international applicant is defined as a non-U.S. citizen who applies for admission to the Ed.S. in Educational Technology program. An applicant who is a U.S. citizens but who is working outside of the United States should apply as a domestic student.

For the most up-to-date information, as well as a link to the International Student Application, please see: http://admissions.boisestate.edu/international/ .

Important notes

- All students, no matter their citizenship, must submit the departmental application forms materials outlined in this guidebook.

- Even though applicants are not required to travel to the United States to take courses for the EdS in Educational Technology program, a copy of a passport will be needed in order to confirm identity (sent to International Office of Boise State University).

- Depending on one's country of origin, or from which institution one holds a degree (ex., an Anglophone university), the TOEFL may or may not be required. You may be exempted from the English proficiency requirement if you are a native English speaker or if English is your first language. Examples of countries where students may be from include (but are not limited to): Australia, the British Caribbean, Canada (English-speaking provinces only), Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Please contact the International Student Admissions Office for further information.

- The TOEFL examine MUST have been taken within the past two years.*

- Rather than complete the regular graduate college application form, non-U.S. citizens must complete the Online International Graduate Application.

- The "Financial Form" and "Bank Verification" forms are NOT required for students applying to the online EdS in Educational Technology program and who have no plans to move to the United States.

> *If you are required to take the TOEFL, please ensure that test scores are sent to Boise State University, School Code 4018.*

EdS in EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Complete?	Required	Notes
	Consult with the EdS Program Advisor Jerry Foster at jfoster@boisestate.edu .	Make an introductory visit with the EdS advisor before applying for admission. He will ask about your goals, provide the EdTech Course Catalog, and help you create a course plan.
	Apply for admission using the Graduate College Application	See http://graduatecollege.boisestate.edu and other information in this guidebook.
	Submit your transcripts	Contact all institutions from which you have taken undergraduate or graduate courses (whether or not a degree was earned), and have the transcripts sent to the **Graduate College.** (see below)
	Letter of Application	Completed by applicant and uploaded as part of application. *It must follow guidelines found in this application guidebook.*
	Resumé / C.V.	Completed by applicant and uploaded as part of application. *It must follow guidelines found in this application guidebook.*
	Program Recommendations	Contact information submitted as part of application. The reference is to be completed online by references (they will receive a link).

Graduate Admission and Degree Services

Post:	Fax:	Email:
Riverfront Hall, Room 304	208-426-2789	gradcoll@boisestate.edu
Boise State University		
1910 University Drive		
Boise, ID 83725-1110		

APPLYING TO THE GRADUATE COLLEGE &
THE EdS/EDTECH PROGRAM

Please be aware that you are completing ONE application, but you are actually applying for two things: 1) Admission to the Graduate College at Boise State University, and 2) Admission to the EdS in Educational Technology program in the College of Education at Boise State University.

As such, you will receive two different letters of decision. It is possible to be accepted to the Graduate College and not be accepted for the program (though the reverse is not possible). Should you meet the minimum requirement of the Graduate College, you will get one letter. After the Educational Technology program personnel make a separate decision about your application for the program, you will receive another letter informing you of our decision (again from the Graduate College).

Admission Procedure

PLEASE NOTE: Your application will not be considered unless ALL items below have been completed. To start, find the "APPLY" area at http://gradcoll.boisestate.edu. Go to the form and create an account.

**You may check the status of your application
by logging in with the account you have created.**

Applicants can typically expect a notification of their status in the program (accepted or denied) within three weeks of submitting a completed application.

GRADUATE COLLEGE APPLICATION FORM

Degree Path Screen:

Select "I would like to apply for a Graduate Degree Program." Then select "Educational Technology – EdS" in the box below that. Please select the term in which you would like to enroll (Spring, Summer, Fall).

The final box describes "early enrollment." This does not apply for the Educational Technology EdS program.

College of University Screen

Use the "Lookup" function to help complete the fields. Please submit the name of the university from which have earned (or will earn) the graduate degree most closely aligned to the educational technology program, as well as the institution where you earned your most recent bachelor's degrees. The third university listed can be for whatever other degree or credits you might have earned. You do not need to list more than three for the application, but you must have transcripts sent to the Graduate College for ALL universities from which you have earned any graduate or undergraduate credit.

Idaho Legal Residency Screen

Please be aware that the state (or country) in which you live has no bearing on tuition. All students, no matter their location, pay the same flat fee as indicated on our department website.

State Employee Tuition Waiver

Full-time state of Idaho employees are ___not___ eligible for a tuition waiver.

IMPORTANT!

After you have digitally signed the application, there are two additional critical steps:

1. In the menu on the left, click "Educational Technology – EdS". You will see a page that allows you to upload your letter of application and resume. Note that you are limited to a 2500KB (2.5 MB) file for each.

2. Click the "Recommendations" link to add the names of three recommendation providers. *See the "EdS in EdTech Recommendations" section in this document for more information.*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTACHMENTS
LETTER OF APPLICATION

The letter <u>must include</u> a discussion of:

- **Background.** Describe your relevant academic and professional background in educational technology or a related field (technology education, training, curriculum & instruction, instructional design, etc.) OR explain why you want to change fields.
- **Philosophy.** Describe your approach to teaching and learning, particularly as it relates to the use of technology
- **Expectations and goals.** Explain how the EdS curriculum will ameliorate your current knowledge and professional practice. How will this degree help you achieve your professional and personal goals?
- **Project**. Describe a specific project that you might consider doing as part of a culminating activity
- **Explain deficiencies**. If you have deficiencies in your background (ex., lower than expected GPA), please be sure to explain (1) the cause of the deficiency, (2) how you will prevent the deficiency from recurring, and (3) why we should consider admission.
- **Achievements.** Highlight particularly noteworthy aspects of your resume, such as leadership roles in professional organizations, important awards you might have earned, conference presentations, journal publications, etc.

Formatting of the Letter of Application

Length	No more than two pages total (600-800 words)
Margins	1" margins on all sides
Document size	8" x 10" paper or A4
Font size	12 point font
Font face	Common serif or sans serif (Arial/Helvetica, Times/Times New Roman)
Spacing	Single
File name	Must include your last name and first initial, the year of application, and "appletter". Example, "jones_a_2012_appletter"
File type	The only acceptable format will be a PDF file.

- You may use formal letterhead if you would like, but it is not necessary.
- The top left of the letter should include: the date, and below that, your name and address
- You can simply write, "Dear Selection Committee" as the salutation

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTACHMENTS
RÉSUMÉ / CURRICULUM VITA

Your résumé (or curriculum vita) should be formatted following the guidelines. If you have a current résumé or C.V. that is formatted differently, please be sure that it conforms to the guidelines. *Your* résumé *DOES NOT need to have an "objective" or "goal" or "summary" statement at the top, but it should bear your name and contact information.*

SECTIONS: Each section should have the title in BOLD so as to clearly separate it. The sections should appear in the following order, but need not be numbered on your document:

Education
- A listing of completed degrees and/or any degrees you expect to complete
- Granting institution(s)
- The year in which the degree was completed or the anticipated graduation date should be listed starting with the most recent (reverse chronological order)

Professional Certifications or Licenses
- Please list any completed and current certifications or licenses you might hold
- If you do not hold any, please indicate "none" for this section

Work Experience
- A listing of professional positions you hold / have held
- Where the job is/was located
- The number of years (or months if less than one year) in the position

Courses / Workshops Taught
- Listing of courses or workshops you have taught or co-taught
- Please indicate if they were online or face-to-face
- Please indicate the timeframe in which the course/workshop was taught
- If you have evaluation data, please include it

Publications or Presentations
- If you have any publications or presentations, please list them in APA 6.0 format
- If you do not have any, please indicate "none" for this section

Grants
- If you have any been awarded grant(s), either as lead investigator as a co-investigator, please list it
- You may list either internal, local, state, regional, or national grants
- Be sure to indicate the year(s) the grant covers and the amount
- List either awarded grants or ones currently under review
- If you do not have any, please indicate "none" for this section

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Awards and Honors
- If you have any professionally relevant awards or honors, please list them here.
- If you do not have any, please indicate "none" for this section

Service Contributions
- Please describe any relevant leadership or service activities you might provide to organizations with which you are involved

Professional Memberships
- List any current local, state, national, or international professional organizations to which you may belong
- If you do not have any, please indicate "none" for this section

Other
- If there is other pertinent and professionally relevant information not listed in the sections above, but which you would like to include, please list it here.
- If you do not have anything to include here, please indicate "none" for this section

Formatting of the Résumé /CV

Length	No more than 6 pages total
Margins	1" margins on all sides
Document size	8" x 10" paper or A4
Font size	12 point font
Font face	Common serif or sans serif (Arial/Helvetica, Times/Times New Roman)
Spacing	varies; should have adequate white space
File name	Must include your last name and first initial, the year of application, and "résumé". Example, "jones_a_2012_resume"
File type	The only acceptable format will be a PDF file.

**PLEASE SEE THE APPENDIX FOR A PROPERLY
FORMATTED EXAMPLE OF A RÉSUMÉ /C.V.**

ACADEMIC & PERSONAL REFERENCES

An applicant must provide the names and contact information of three people who can attest to her or his aptitude for and commitment to:

- Graduate study in educational technology
- Professional effectiveness
- Potential for influencing education
- Scholarly abilities and dispositions
- Personal and professional integrity

Each referee should be able to comment on any other relevant information. We strongly prefer that at least one reference is from someone familiar with your academic background (such as an adviser, or a professor with whom you have had more than one class). Anyone providing a reference cannot be related (through family or marriage) to the applicant.

All persons listed will be contacted and asked to complete a web-based form, and a follow-up call to the reference may be conducted if deemed necessary. Applicants themselves will also be notified when the reference forms are sent. In addition to automated reminders, applicants are encouraged to courteously ask her or his references to complete the form by its due date.

A person's application is **_not_** considered complete until at least two of three references have been submitted.

Using a Likert-type scale, references will be asked both to rate and comment on the applicant's:

- Aptitude for and commitment to advanced graduate studies
- Professional effectiveness
- Profession dispositions
- Potential for influencing education
- Scholarly abilities
- Personal and group work habits
- Communication ability
- Personal and professional integrity

References will also be asked short, open-ended questions about the applicant's suitability for the program. No letter will be required.

Each reference form will bear both a qualitative and quantitative score, which will become part of the overall evaluation of a person's application.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The application for a graduate assistantship is separate from the Graduate College / EdS/EdTech application. If you are interested in applying, please send a note to edtecheds@boisestate.edu and indicate that you would like a link to the online application form.

In terms of GA selection, priority goes first to doctoral students already enrolled, then incoming doctoral students, then Ed.S. students, and then to MET students.

About Assistantships

EDTECH graduate assistantships provide an excellent opportunity to:

- gain practical experience on real world projects or online co-teaching with a faculty member
- collaborate with faculty on research projects
- immerse yourself in the scholarship of educational technology
- include your work experience with the department on your résumé.

The Department of Educational Technology offers a <u>limited</u> number of full-time and part-time graduate assistantships. There is no guarantee that there will be any openings in a given academic year, as their availability depends on department budget and current openings. We hire both local and distance-based GAs, but any applicant MUST BE a U.S. citizen or legal resident of the United States.

Students who expect to be employed full-time at the time of matriculation are not eligible to apply for a graduate assistantship. We do not award assistantships as "scholarships," as there is an obligatory amount of work required for it, which is in addition to time that must be set aside for course work (avg. of 20 hours per week).

Full time GAs work for the EdTech Department 20 hours per week, take 9 credits (3 classes), receive a full-tuition waiver for three classes each semester, and a $10,000 stipend paid out over two semesters. Health insurance benefits are also included.

Part-time GAs work for the department 10 hours per week, take 6 credits (2 classes), and receive a tuition waiver, health insurance, and a $5,000 stipend paid out over two semesters.

NOTIFICATIONS AND DISCLAIMERS

Any person for whom a Program Area Recommendation form has been generated by the Graduate College and who has submitted all ancillary materials by the beginning of the application review date is assured of a fair and thorough review of her or his materials.

Boise State University is strongly committed to achieving excellence through cultural diversity. The university actively encourages applications from women, persons of color, and members of other underrepresented groups.

Applicants are promised a confidential review process. This means that the only persons who will be allowed to see materials are faculty and selected staff members in the Department of Educational Technology, and selected personnel in the Graduate College. All data will be stored in electronic format in a secure location. Any paper-based materials will be stored in a locked office on campus.

Scores from any rubric used, any notes or discussions regarding an application, any reference forms or letters submitted about an applicant, and any other material used in the review process will not be released. Disaggregated data concerning admissions decisions will also not be released to persons outside the university.

Materials submitted to the committee for review become the temporary property of the Department of Educational Technology, and these will be stored electronically for a period not to exceed ten years. Any general data collected about applicants through the application process may be part of external research reports with authorization of the university's Institutional Review Board. External reports will not use any personally identifiable information about any applicants.

Any person submitting any or all application materials for consideration for admittance to the Ed.S. program in Educational Technology automatically accepts the disclaimers described above.

Any questions regarding these disclaimers/policies should be submitted to the Ed.S. program coordinator in the Department of Educational Technology.

APPENDICES

**EXAMPLE OF RÉSUMÉ/CV TO BE SUBMITTED AS PART OF APPLICATION
TO THE EdS IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Tara J. Majead
114 S. Trafalger Ln., #456
Olean, NY 14567
tjm@yahoo.com
315-332-5555

Education

M.A.Ed., Educational Psychology (2005)
SUNY-Albany

B.S., Chemistry & Secondary Education (1998)
University of Rochester

Professional Certifications or Licenses

Secondary science teacher, New York State

Work Experience

Science Curriculum Developer & Online Coordinator, Oneida County Schools (2008-present)

High school chemistry teacher, Oneida County Schools (1998 - 2008)

Retail Assistant, Gander Mountain Sporting Goods (1992-1998)

Courses / Workshops Taught

Intro Chemistry (online; New York Virtual School; 2011 – present)

ED 565: The Inquiry-based Science Classroom (SUNY-Utica, Fall 2010; 20 students)
Course evaluation: 4.6 of 5.0

AP Chemistry (Grade 12; OCPS, 2003 – 2008)
In 5 years, 90% of students passed the AP Chemistry exam

General Chemistry (Grade 11; OCPS, 1998 – 2003)

Publications or Presentations

Zang, K. M. & Majead, T. J. (2009). New teachers' acquisition of teaching skills focused on inquiry-based learning. *New Journal of Science Teaching*, 54(1), 83-95. doi: 4532xzq66q449.

Grants (Awarded)

New York State STEM Improvement Grant for Middle School Students (2009-2011; $80,000). Primary Investigator: Dr. Marleena Gravat (SUNY-Utica). Co-PIs: T. Majead; R. Pengraves; T. Hill.

Awards and Honors

Oneida County Public Schools Science Teacher of the Year (2005)

Oneida County Public Schools Parent Teacher Association's Student Advising Award (2003)

Service Contributions

Treasurer, Town of Clinton Women's Entrepreneurial Society (2009-2011)

Advisor, Clinton High School Science Club (2005-2008)

Coach, Clinton High School Varsity Girls Volleyball (1998-2005)

Professional Memberships

New York State Science Teachers Association
International Society for Technology in Education

Other

Business owner; "Girl Power!" 2010 - present.
(a membership-based online service where professional females in the STEM disciplines serve as mentors and tutors for female students, grades 6-12).

APPLICATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

Please note that this guide may be used internally by program personnel. It is subject to change at any time, in whole or in part, and *without notification of applicants*. An application will ONLY be reviewed if ALL materials are received by the start of the review process.

Once all materials have been received, the applicant will receive a notice from the department. Applications are only reviewed if the applicant holds a master's degree (or will complete in the semester of application). If applicable, submission of TOEFL scores beyond the acceptable time frame means that the application is incomplete.

FROM	ELEMENT	OUTSTANDING *(9-10 points)*	SATISFACTORY *(6-8 points)*	INADEQUATE or NOT A FIT *(0-5 points)*
Appletter	Conformance to formatting guidelines			
Appletter	Overall quality of the letter (grammar, tone, etc.)			
Appletter	Applicability of professional background to studies			
Appletter /CV	Match of career goals to program mission			
CV	Academic background as it relates to educational technology			
CV	Record of scholarly contributions			
CV	Record of service contributions			
CV	Connections to the field of EdTech			
App.	Undergraduate GPA			
App.	Graduate GPA			
App.	GRE scores (& TOEFL if applicable)			
App.	Overall academic success			

Scores from any rubric used, any notes or discussions regarding an application, any reference forms or letters submitted about an applicant, and any other material used in the review process **will not** be released.

A WORD ABOUT THE DECISION PROCESS

A "full review" is one in which the committee examines all submitted materials (ex., letter of application, résumé, recommendations, etc.)

Elements required for initial review (all elements must be in place by the final deadline):
- Graduate College application is complete (includes payment of application fee)
- Official scores have been received and are on file (TOEFL if applicant is not a U.S. citizen)
- All official transcripts received and on file
- Completed Letter of Application
- Completed Resume
- At least two of three references have completed the reference request (a link is automatically sent to them).

Elements necessary for automatic qualification for full review:
- Both undergraduate and graduate GPAs are at or above the minimum expectations AND
- A completed application that conforms to all guidelines

Elements that warrant a closer inspection before moving to full review:
- The undergraduate and/or graduate GPAs are somewhat below the minimum expectations
- TOEFL scores (if applicable) are somewhat lower than expected

Elements that typically disqualify an application for full review:
- The undergraduate and/or graduate GPAs are substantially below the minimum expectation
- TOEFL scores (if applicable) are much than expected

Incomplete applications, materials that do not conform to guidelines, and applications submitted after the due date will not be considered for review.

VETERANS

For information on military benefits, visit http://veterans.boisestate.edu

EDUCATIONAL ACCESS CENTER

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations to fully participate in this class should contact the Educational Access Center.

All accommodations must be approved through the EAC prior to being implemented. To learn more about the accommodation process, visit the EAC's website at EAC.BOISESTATE.EDU . The EAC office is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time.

Phone: 208.426.1583

Email: eacinfo@boisestate.edu

Website: eac.boisestate.edu

Common Errors and Easy Fixes in Written Expression
by Jerry Foster, MFA

Professional educators should be careful about the image they project when they communicate, particularly their use of basic grammar and sentence sophistication.

- **Basic grammar:**
  - <u>Punctuation</u>: The misuse (or lack of use) of commas is a frequent issue we see. However, we also note issues with some writers who seemingly do not know the difference between plural and singular possessive, commas and semi-colons, etc.
  - <u>Capitalization</u> issues are sometimes found; only capitalize proper nouns. If you are not sure if a noun is proper or not, take a couple of minutes to research it.
  - <u>Spelling</u> errors result from either a lack of diligence or lack of time. Please proofread your work.

- **Sentence sophistication:**
  - <u>Clarity of expression</u>. Make sure everything is understood at a glance. Busy readers do not want to stop and re-read sentences to ascertain meaning.
  - <u>Multiple structures / Complexity of sentences</u>: We sometimes note that applicants either do not vary sentence type or complexity (using all simple sentences, for example). Remember that what may be great writing for syllabus instructions for a 9th grade history class or 5th grade reading class may not be best for a letter of application to a graduate program.

Commas follow introductory clauses and phrases. Almost everyone scores poorly on this writing practice because most professional, non-academic writers and editors ignore this rule and so most non-professional writers begin to think it is normal to ignore the comma after an introductory phrase. In academic and professional writing, such as white papers, theses and dissertations, and articles for peer-reviewed journals, we have to focus carefully on grammar-by-the-book, which includes punctuation.

Sentences, as you know, contain a subject and verb, and usually an object. In English, we often tack clarifying information onto the front-end or back-end of sentences. These single words or strings of words are not complete sentences; therefore, they are phrases. They are meaningless until you attach them (properly) to the sentence. The proper way to attach them is with a comma.

Here are two examples:

> *In English,* we often tack clarifying information onto the front-end or back-end of sentences.

The core sentence actually begins with the word *we* because it is the subject. All sentences do not start with the subject, but most do. The preceding words, *In English,* are an introductory phrase. Therefore, you should connect the phrase to the sentence with a comma. Think of the comma as a thumb tack with which you connect (or tack together) the two parts.

Phrases and clauses can also appear at the tail end of a sentence, *if you know what I mean*.

The last six words of the preceding sentence also constitute a clause because this subject-and-verb combination make little sense if they stand alone. So, properly tack them to the sentence with a comma. Remember that commas frequently function as thumb tacks.

Now that you have reviewed this explanation, go to the following web address if you are unsure and practice on the examples it provides---
http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/nova/nova2.htm

Commas follow city and state. Here is an example. When I started my teaching career in Prairie City, Oregon, I had no idea I would end up at Idaho's largest university. Notice the comma after the city (in this case, after the *village*) and after the state.

Plural or singular possessive. Many native speakers make this error. The name of our degree is Master of Educational Technology, which can be paraphrased as *master's degree in educational technology*. Notice that "master" is singular. However, we are inveterate abbreviators, and that leads to confusion. For example, we often drop the word *degree* and say that we earned a *bachelors* in math, but we truly do not mean plural; we mean singular possessive, which is written like this: "a bachelor's in math." The word *degree* is understood because Americans (and the British, as well) abbreviate so much in speech and writing. Remember this: plural does not exist when naming or referring to academic degrees.

We should capitalize the words *bachelor's* or *master's* or *degree* only when we identify the whole name of the degree, like this: I believe he earned a <u>Bachelor of Arts</u> in Scriptwriting. Some style guides suggest placing the course of study in lower case, like this: Bachelor of Arts in scriptwriting.

We should not capitalize in the following informal situations:

- I believe he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Scriptwriting. (*Degree* is lower-cased because it is not part of the name.)
- I earned my bachelor's in 1974. (The name of the degree is not presented.)
- She earned a bachelor of science degree within the past year or two. (Why in lower case? Because it is not the full name of the degree.)

Capitalization in general. This is a common error. Some writers mistakenly capitalize job titles because they reason that job titles are the names of jobs, and everyone knows that we should capitalize the names of things. Well, that is carrying the rule a bit too far. The following examples are incorrectly capitalized.

1. She is a *University Administrator*.
2. He's been a *Special Education Teacher* for close to nine years.
3. I am a *Math* teacher.

The following example <u>is</u> correct, however, because *English* is the name of the language; it just happens to also be an academic discipline. I do not capitalize educational technology unless

used in the name of the department, and that goes for the abbreviation, as well. I write EdTech when referring to the department but ed-tech when referring to educational technology in general.

Sometimes, people mistakenly capitalize an area, such as Northern California, which is a very different matter than capitalizing an established entity, such as North Carolina or North Dakota. There is no official entity known as Northern California, so *northern* should not be capitalized.

In general, do not capitalize generic things. One student mentioned being "a Military wife" and "a Veteran." Both are worthwhile attributes, to be certain, but neither is actually the name of something, so do not capitalize them.

Noun-pronoun agreement. The pronoun *they* is one of the most misused words in the English language because it means plural and many people almost insist on using it when referring to a singular noun. Here are two examples.

"I am a <u>Ford</u> man because <u>they</u> make the best pickups." Even though Ford is a company comprised of many people, the company is a singular entity so the pronoun should be the singular *it.*

"The idea was as foreign as meeting <u>someone</u> who said <u>they</u> didn't like chocolate." In academic writing, we want to avoid incongruity. The word *someone* is singular and the word *they* is plural and combining them is incongruous. The two are also grammatically incompatible. You can fix the problem by changing the noun or the pronoun—just as long as noun and pronoun match in their singularity or in their plurality.

> Example 1:
>> The idea was as foreign as meeting people (plural) who said they (plural) didn't like chocolate.
>
> Example 2:
>> The idea was as foreign as meeting someone who said he or she (singular) didn't like chocolate.
>
> Example 3:
>> The idea was as foreign as meeting someone who didn't like chocolate.

PET PEEVES

Pet Peeve #1. I don't see this error too often in letters of application, but I hear it a lot in casual conversation and it irks me every time. I even hear it from news people who very well ought to know better.

> Example: I graduated high school in 2001.

Has an egg ever laid a chicken? No, and neither has a student ever graduated a high school. It is the other way around. Chickens lay eggs and high schools and colleges graduate students, so both language and logic are improved when we say, "I graduated *from* high school in 2001." It also would be correct to say, "I *was graduated* from high school in 2001.

Pet Peeve #2. The lack of logic in the following statement drives me nuts when I hear it—and I hear it all too often.

Example: It's time I started working on my master's.

How can anyone say *my master's* when he hasn't earned one yet? It is better to say: It's time I started working on *a* master's degree. (This is a separate issue, but also notice that I used the singular possessive form—*master's*. I did so because it is assumed that I am talking about a master's *degree*.)

Now, carefully read through your letter of application and look for the kinds of errors noted in this handout.