**AP Style: Time Elements**

**Using the day of the week versus the date**

**Today, tonight, yesterday, tomorrow**: According to the AP manual, their use is appropriate only in afternoon newspapers. (Most dailies are morning papers.)

- Instead, refer to days of the week within seven days before or after today (based on the day your report will be read or heard). For earlier or later dates, use month and date (Sept. 1).
- References to last and next week are considered redundant. These are clear from the context of the writing — past-tense verbs for things that have already happened, future tense for those that occur in days to come.

**Abbreviating months**: Abbreviate months with dates; spell them out when they stand alone.

**Time of day**

The exact time when something occurred or will occur is unnecessary in most stories. Instead ....

- Describe the time rather than give an exact hour to give readers a better sense.
  - The suspect was apprehended late Monday. (Not "at 10:25 p.m.")
  - The accident tied up rush-hour traffic. (Not "5 p.m. traffic")
- Time is critical for beginnings of upcoming meetings, exact times of broadcasts, and so on.
- Whose time do you use? Use the time where the event occurred.
  - New York City went dark at 7 p.m. when the eastern power grid began to fail.
- Specify time zone only when it affects readers directly — TV or radio broadcasts, for example.
  - The president's address begins at 8 p.m. EDT.

**Expressing a range of time**: When expressing a period of hours, use either of these constructions:

- The polling places are open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday.
- They're open 8 a.m.–7 p.m.

Do not mix the two forms (NOT "from 8 a.m.-7 p.m.")