

April 30, 2007

Question: Some of the LaTeX commands are kind of long, can you make any aliases or abbreviations for these commands?

Sincerely yours,

F. Friend

Hi F. Friend,

In the preamble to a document, you can create your own commands that can act as abbreviations for longer commands or more commonly this is used to substitute a command for a small set of commands. The \LaTeX command one uses for this is called `\newcommand` and its form is as follow:

```
\newcommand{\any}{\anycommand \anycommand}
```

Here are a couple examples of the use of `\newcommand`:

```
\documentclass{report}
\newcommand{\zz}{\vspace*{.05 in} \textbf{Student Fees: }}
\newcommand{\yy}{\vspace*{.15 in} \filbreak \large \bfseries Students Rates:}
\newcommand{\isu}{Iowa State University}
\begin{document}
% And then in the document, you would use your \newcommand
% just like any normal LaTeX command.
\zz \$20.00 per student. {\yy} $10.00 per hour. \newline \isu
\end{document}
```

You probably want to avoid overriding current LaTeX commands with the `\newcommand(s)` that you create as this could lead to some very unexpected results.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Struss
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