



TRAINING SPIRITUAL LEADERS THAT SHAPE THE CHURCH AND INFLUENCE THE NATIONS



Guide to the Writing of Research Papers and Dissertations

September 2023

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Appendix 1: Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*, Second Edition,
February 2015

I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Guide is to discuss the purpose and process of writing research papers and dissertations/theses in response to the requirements of the Carey International University of Theology (CIUT), as well as the formatting standards to be used in the presentation of such works. Thus, both the development of the content of research papers and dissertations/theses and their visual presentation, are addressed.¹

This guide draws from:

Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth edition, by Kate L. Turabian, revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. Fitzgerald, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018).

The Christian Writer's Manual of Style, Fourth Edition, by Robert Hudson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016).

The SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014).

Soli Deo Gloria

II. WHY DOES CIUT REQUIRE RESEARCH PAPERS AND DISSERTATIONS?

The first question that many students ask when confronted with the requirement to write either research papers or major dissertations/theses is, “**Why?**” “Why does CIUT require the writing of Research Papers, Dissertations and Theses?” That is a reasonable question and understanding the answer will help the student to understand many other aspects, including the need to present a persuasive argument with a clear thesis statement and a logical structure, the proper use of research materials, the danger of plagiarism and the seriousness with which it is regarded, and therefore the need for detailed footnotes and a bibliography.

The requirement for writing flows from the CIUT Philosophy of Education, given below, but also written in our official Catalog.

[The CIUT Philosophy of Education](#)

Our Methodology: Exegesis→ Doctrine→ Historical Theology→Pastoral Application

¹ Note: As this document is neither a CIUT academic research paper nor a dissertation/thesis, it does not itself conform to the format described herein.

1. Theology to Doxology

All teaching must be exegetically based on Scripture with the goal of bringing glory to God.

2. Christ-Centered

All teaching must be Christ-centered, recognizing that all Scripture points to our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Authority Base – Sola Scriptura (Rule/conduct)

The basis for all doctrine, conduct, and practice is the inerrant and infallible Word of God.

Exegesis— Authentic Biblical teaching begins with serious exegesis of key passages in both the Old and New Testaments. Most important is what the Biblical text says (exegesis), rather than what others might think it says (eisegesis). This is foundational in the pursuit of Biblical and theological truth.

Doctrine— The teachings gleaned from the process of Biblical exegesis are then systematized into a clear doctrinal expression so that the Biblical threads which span the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—can be seen.

Historical Theology— Beneficial to the understanding of Biblical doctrines is tracing their development and application in the church over the centuries. One can see which of the elemental doctrines of the Scripture have always been believed, everywhere, and by all, and how they were similarly or variously applied throughout the long history of the Church.

Pastoral Application— God’s truth is living, relevant, and applicable to mankind today. CIUT encourages its students to boldly and faithfully apply the efficacious and transformative truth of Scripture to their personal lives and ministries, while trusting God’s Spirit to bring the increase.

4. Teaching: Interactive, with small group dynamics

All teaching is to be instructive, interactive, and made applicable through small group interactions.

5. Aim – Our desire is to BUILD minds, NOT simply to fill minds

Teaching is not a matter of filling a student’s mind with information, but rather the building and developing of his mind for the furtherance of the Kingdom.

6. End Result: Expository Preachers

The end result of all CIUT teaching is the training of expository preachers, who can accurately teach the truths of Scripture, build up their local churches, and shape the nations.

Purpose

With the same intention as theological training institutions around the world, CIUT is dedicated to filling hearts with the knowledge and love of God in preparation for conveying “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) “to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). We deeply desire our students to know the Word of God and to have their hearts and minds transformed by it, rather than simply to be able to repeat facts about the Bible, to parrot the thoughts of lecturers and/or commentators, or to rigidly follow systems of theology. We use tests at the end of each course to determine whether the basic information of the course has been absorbed, but we require research papers to determine whether the student has fully understood the course material and can apply it in the study of God’s Word. Each degree program also requires a major thesis paper (also referred to as a dissertation) which confirms that the student has absorbed the program teaching to an extent and at a level consistent with the expectations of the degree program.

In addition, we believe and expect that the work of CIUT students in the writing of course research papers and capstone dissertations/theses will impact not only the ministry of the students themselves but will be useful for the glory of God in the church nationally and globally.

We are seeking, in the research papers and then in the dissertation/thesis, to assess whether this level of education is being achieved in individual students and in the whole body of those who have come to us to be equipped, encouraged and empowered in the Word of God.

III. WHAT IS EXPECTED IN A RESEARCH PAPER OR DISSERTATION?

The student will then ask, “**What** is required of a research paper, dissertation or thesis?” In keeping with the purpose for which CIUT requires students to write such papers, “to demonstrate thorough comprehension of and an ability to apply course materials to the study of God’s Word,” research papers, dissertations and theses are to feature a clearly stated proposition or thesis statement, which will then be defended in a well-researched and logically presented argument. In other words, every research paper or dissertation is to be in the form of a persuasive argument. The author states a proposition, takes a position, or proposes a conclusion, and then provides evidence to support that proposition.

Note that this means that CIUT is not looking for a general commentary on a topic, or an exegetical analysis of a particular Biblical passage in a paper or other assignment in an exegetical course (though that may be an essential element). The papers required by CIUT are not narratives. The process by which you came to your conclusion, by which you developed

your proposition, position or thesis is not what is important. What is important is that you have articulated a proposition, position or thesis, and that you have been able to support that proposition, position or thesis with a clear and logical argument.

The length expectations of a research paper or dissertation will vary according to the degree program, the specific course, and the direction provided in the course syllabus or from the lecturer. But in general, the paper will have an introductory section, a main body, a conclusion, as well as a bibliography.

The Introduction

The Introduction of a research paper, dissertation or thesis will present:

- background material (as and if necessary) relating to the topic of the paper,
- a clearly stated proposition, position or thesis, and
- an outline as to how the paper will attempt to prove the proposition, position or thesis.

The Main Body

The Main Body of the paper will attempt to convince the reader of the truth or accuracy of the proposition, position or thesis stated in the introduction. There should be a logical flow to the argument and an appropriate balance to the amount of material presented in support of each point. Positive arguments should be made, each supported by sub-points as required. Negative arguments that a reader might have should also be addressed if and as appropriate. That is, if there is a significant counterargument to the thesis, it should be addressed in the body of the work.

Application

The final section in the main body of any research paper, dissertation or thesis should present implications of the thesis statement, as well as pastoral application in the general ministry context of the author.

The Conclusion

The conclusion of the paper basically recapitulates the proposition, position or thesis statement with a brief summary of each major point made.

Balance, and What a Marker is Looking For

In general, the combination of Introduction and Conclusion should not exceed 10% of the total length of the paper; the bulk of the paper being devoted to the development of the argument in support of the proposition, position or thesis.

A marker might read the introduction and conclusion before reading the main body of the paper, looking for a clear statement of the proposition, position or thesis, and a confident assertion of the proof of that proposition, position or thesis statement in the conclusion.

A marker might also check the paper's bibliography before reading the main body of the paper, looking to see if the paper's author has used key resources in researching the paper. In addition, the marker may look at footnotes before reading the paper, noting whether all resources listed in the bibliography have indeed been used, and if there is a balance in the use of the resources.

For example, if five resources are listed in the bibliography, but there are footnotes from only one or two of those resources, the marker might rightly question how much research has actually been conducted. Similarly, if each major point in the main body of the paper is only supported by reference to one resource, even if the paper turns to another resource in defending a subsequent major point, a marker might question the research conducted and whether a balance has been struck between the viewpoints of different authors and sources.

Remember that the object is to assess the student's understanding of and ability to apply the material covered in the course or program. Over-reliance on a limited number of resources indicates over-reliance on the author of those works at the expense of the student's ability to articulate their own understanding.

Finally, a marker might look at how much of the paper is devoted to each of the major points in the main body. It is common to find that a writer has devoted much space to the first point, less to the second point, and so on, even to the point where the final point appears either as an afterthought to fill in space to meet the length requirement of the assignment, or as a significant point given very little space as the page limit was approaching. It *may* be appropriate for the major points in a paper to be of different lengths, but in general, there should be balance. An author may strategically place the most important point in the sequence of those being addressed in the paper, either to begin or to end with the strongest argument in favor of the proposition, position or thesis, but each major point should be given due attention, eliminated, or relegated to a footnote or an appendix.

The author would do well to always keep in mind that the point of the paper is to persuade the reader that the position taken, the proposition stated, or the thesis presented, is correct. Any material which does not contribute to that purpose should be eliminated, and all material which would persuade the reader of the correctness of the proposition should be strongly presented and supported by references as appropriate.

IV. HOW DOES ONE WRITE A RESEARCH PAPER OR DISSERTATION?

The next logical question is "**How?**" "How do I go about writing a Research Paper, Dissertation or Thesis?" While the writing of papers of different lengths is a common requirement in many different academic fields, many of CIUT's students have not been required to do so in their studies prior to beginning with CIUT.

There are many personal variations to the process discussed in the following paragraphs. The marker will not see the process by which you have gone about writing a paper, only the result. The following notes are therefore offered as one suggestion, particularly for those who have little experience in writing persuasive arguments.

Writing a Paper is an Iterative Process

The first thing to be said is that the writing of any paper is an iterative process. That is, the writer should expect that there will be an ongoing process of revision as the paper is being constructed.

The proposition, position or thesis should be as clearly in the mind of the writer and as clearly stated in the introduction as is possible, but the author should be open to the possibility of having to refine that proposition, position or thesis. Similarly, every sentence, and every paragraph will need refining, as will the overall flow of the paper. The Introduction should be written first, but the Introduction should also be reviewed, and if necessary rewritten, last. And the time required for this iterative process should be taken into account in the planning of the writing process. If at all possible, the paper should be completed with sufficient time before it is due for it to be set aside for a period of time before a final review and submission.

This writer has found, however, that any project will consume all of the resources made available to it. That is, the more time that you assign to a project, the more time that project will take. Similarly, when there is little time to complete a project, you will complete the project, but it's quality might depend upon the efficiency with which you have used that time.

Expect that the writing of a good paper will take time, and budget your time according to your proficiency in tackling the research, crafting and writing a persuasive argument.

The Topic

The topic of your paper is the broad subject being addressed. If the paper being written is in response to the requirements of a course in Systematic Theology, the topic might be anthropology, or soteriology, or any of the other broad subjects comprising that field of studies. Similarly, if the field being studied is Christian Ethics, the topic might be euthanasia, abortion, marriage and divorce, war, the use of torture, or any other broad subject area within the field of Ethics.

The following may sound obvious to state, but clearly, the topic of the paper to be written should be some aspect of the course for which the paper is assigned. Do not submit a paper for credit in a course on Systematic Theology that addresses a topic more appropriately related to Church History.

The topic for the paper may be assigned in the Syllabus or by the course lecturer. Look carefully, before you begin research, to see if the topic of the paper has been assigned. If you

wish to write a paper addressing a different topic, you MUST seek permission of the lecturer prior to submitting your paper. To fail to do so risks failing the assignment, and likely therefore the course.

Some lecturers will be specific in the assignment of the topic of papers to be written, some even going beyond the assignment of a particular topic to a specific question within that topic area. Again, the student must look very carefully in the course Syllabus for specifics of the paper to be written.

Some lecturers will invite students to submit proposals for topics, may provide comments and advice on draft propositions, positions or thesis statements, and may even review outlines and suggest specific resources with which they are familiar for the topic and/or proposition that the student is contemplating. It is not required of CIUT lecturers that they provide this level of support and assistance to students in the writing of papers, and so students should take advantage of the assistance as offered.

Preliminary Research

The student should conduct some preliminary research in the topic area prior to formulating a proposition, position or thesis statement. This preliminary research might be covered by the course lectures or assigned readings but should be focused on narrowing down the topic until something specific, some narrow area, and some problem within that narrow area is identified which can be addressed within the scope of the assigned length of the paper to be written.

Where a topic, or a specific question within the topic has been assigned, the student's problem in identifying that narrow issue has been reduced, on the other hand however, the topic or specific question may not be of particular interest to the student. Where possible, the student should welcome the ability to choose the specific topic and question for the paper, as it is much easier to research and write a paper on a topic that has grabbed the writer's attention or is of particular importance to the writer's situation in life or ministry.

The list of references in the course syllabus will point the student to places where preliminary research can be done. When reading, students should take note of the resources that have been used in the writing of commentaries and other resources. Look at the footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies of the resources being examined. They will lead to other resources that could/should be examined during more detailed research.

The Proposition, Position, or Thesis Statement

The next step for the student should be the development of a preliminary proposition, position, or **thesis statement**.

The thesis statement is the critical element in a research paper or dissertation.

There is, admittedly, some confusion in the use of the word, “thesis.” The word is used in two ways as explained in this definition from the Oxford Concise Dictionary:

Thesis (*pl.* **theses**) **1** a proposition to be maintained or proved. **2** a dissertation, esp. by a candidate for a degree.^{2 3}

Dictionary.com offers this further definition of a “**thesis statement**”:

a short statement, usually one sentence, that summarizes the main point or claim of an essay, research paper, etc., and is developed, supported, and explained in the text by means of examples and evidence.⁴

So, every “thesis” should have a “thesis statement.” In this discussion, we will try to reduce confusion by being consistent in using the word “thesis” in reference to the “thesis statement” in a research paper or dissertation, and the word “dissertation” in reference to the major work required at the end of a CIUT program of study.

Remember that the purpose of a research paper or dissertation is to present a logical argument to persuade the reader that a thesis statement is correct. The **thesis statement** must, therefore, propose something, make a statement, or introduce an “hypothesis” (an idea to be explained or argued) that will be the entire focus of the paper.

Note that the Dictionary.com definition of a thesis statement included that it is “unusually one sentence.” The more precise, concise, and clear you can make your thesis statement, the easier it will be to construct your research paper or dissertation, and the better it will be able to persuade readers. This leads to three points with respect to the thesis statement and the writing of the paper:

- You should be open to the need to refine your thesis statement as part of the iterative process of writing the paper.
 - If it becomes apparent that you cannot adequately defend your thesis given the length of the assignment, you will need to narrow your thesis.
- Everything in the body of the paper should contribute to proof that the thesis statement is correct.
- Anything that is extraneous to this purpose should be removed. In some cases it may be appropriate to include related material in an Annex, but in general, students will find it

² R.E. Allen, Ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, Eighth Edition, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 1268.

³ A third definition is included which is not pertinent to this discussion; “an unstressed syllable or part of a metrical foot in Greek or Latin verse.”

⁴⁴ *Dictionary.com*, “Thesis Statement.” <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/thesis-statement>.

to be necessary to be *brutal* in deleting material not directly pertinent to the thesis statement.

The Writing of the Body

The writing of the body of the research paper or dissertation will consume the majority of the time required for completion of the assignment. Writing is a highly personal process and each student will develop their own approach. Nevertheless, many “guides to writing” are available in book and booklet form, usually to be found on the websites of colleges, universities and seminaries. The following are offered as examples:

- “Seven Steps to a Great Research Paper,” Trinity College, University of Toronto.⁵
- “How to write an effective paper,” Tyndale Seminary, Toronto.⁶
- “How to Write a Theological Paper,” John Frame.⁷

You should begin with a clear plan or outline in mind. Identify your key arguments in support of your thesis statement. Make sure that you address significant counterarguments. Seek to have a good balance in your discussion of the arguments. Be prepared to rearrange your arguments to achieve the greatest impact.

V. PROPER AND IMPROPER USE OF RESOURCES

There are innumerable examples of the proper and improper use of external resources to be found in everything from letters to news reports to journal articles to research papers to sermons to dissertations and beyond.

The Proper use of Resources – Support of Your Ideas

A key thought to the proper use of resources lies in the purpose for which CIUT requires research papers and dissertations. We seek to determine whether the student has deeply assimilated the course or program material, but most significantly, that the student is therefore able to read and understand the Biblical text themselves, to not only find and quote from other resources, but to do so critically, with Bible-based discernment.

The primary “voice” that we wish to hear in a research paper or dissertation is the voice of the student. Quotations from sources should therefore be used to illuminate, to provide support for, or to introduce a counterargument to the points that you, the student, are making. We are

⁵ Trinity College, University of Toronto. <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/seven-steps-to-a-great-research-paper/#:~:text=Seven%20Steps%20to%20a%20Great%20Research%20Paper%201,Paper%20...%207%207.%20Submit%20your%20Paper%20>.

⁶ Tyndale University. <https://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/biblical-studies/home/produce/write>.

⁷ John Frame, “How to Write a Theological Paper.” https://www.proginosko.com/docs/frame_theol_paper.html.

most interested in what **you** have to say about a topic, about a point in support of your thesis, rather than in what any number of famous Biblical scholars have to say.

With this thought in mind, the student will need to be discerning in the use of resources. Each major point in the body of the paper, devoted to the support of the thesis statement, should be based on the student's own study of the Biblical text, the topic area, the focus of your thesis, informed by supporting and contrary arguments found in external sources.

Quotations, properly used, should:

- 1) Support your argument.
- 2) Illustrate an idea that you have presented.
- 3) Give greater clarity to a subject that you are discussing.

All direct quotations from external sources must be clearly identified as such through the use of quotation marks or block quotation formatting as appropriate, with the originator of the quotation acknowledged in footnotes and bibliographical entries. In addition, where ideas are to be found in particular resources, even where direct quotations are not made, footnotes are to be used to give proper attribution of the source(s) of the ideas.

All quotations and sources must be properly cited following *The SBL Handbook of Style* and its "Student Supplement" which is included as an Appendix to this instruction.

The thesis/dissertation is to be the students own work, not a collection of thoughts from other scholars.

For the purpose of guidance, it is recommended that quotations from your research sources represent between 15-20% of your completed thesis. While you may choose to quote a particular resource or author several times, your thesis should give evidence that a number of resources have been used.

[The Improper Use of Resources – Plagiarism](#)

The following paragraphs from the CIUT Academic Catalog constitute our policy on plagiarism.

Plagiarism is defined as: "an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author."⁸

Simply put, when one quotes from a source, or uses ideas derived directly from a source, without properly footnoting the source and listing it in the Bibliography, it is plagiarism.

⁸ Random House Unabridged English Dictionary, "Plagiarism." Random House Publishers, 2019.

Any student whose work shows evidence of Plagiarism will receive an automatic failure for their research paper or thesis.

If a student receives a failing grade for Plagiarism, the Academic Dean or Thesis Advisor will have the following options:

The student may be permitted to re-write portions of their research paper or thesis and receive a 25% grade reduction on their final submitted work.

The student may be required to submit a new research paper, or choose a new thesis topic and therefore start the entire research and writing process from the beginning.

The student may be removed from the degree program and issued a Diploma only.

VI. FORMATTING

It is certainly true that the *content* of research papers and dissertations/theses is more important than the *visual presentation*, but clean and consistent format is important for three major reasons:

- First, in response to the Lord’s command that in “whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31) – we should be concerned that the visual presentation of the material is the very best that we can achieve.
- Secondly, the writing that is done in response to the requirements of CIUT courses may well have wider import for the church, locally and globally, and therefore the visual presentation should be of a very high standard.
- Third, it is a natural consequence of human nature that that which is “pleasing to the eye” (i.e. is presented well, according to the prescribed format) is less likely to distract the lecturer or marker of the paper from its content. If a marker constantly feels the urge to spend time properly formatting your paper, it will cause frustration, the last feeling that one might wish to prompt in someone marking your work.

VII. STYLE GUIDE

Carey International University of Theology has adopted the style guide of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL)⁹ as our standard for academic writing. The *SBL Handbook of Style* is widely used by colleges, universities, seminaries and publishers. The full *SBL Handbook of Style* can be purchased from the Society of Biblical Literature¹⁰ or other sources. We have attached the

⁹ The Society of Biblical Literature. <https://www.sbl-site.org/default.aspx>.

¹⁰ The SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition. <https://www.sbl-site.org/publications/SBLHandbookofStyle.aspx>.

“Student Supplement for The SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition”¹¹ as an appendix to this paper. In most cases this Student Supplement will provide sufficient direction to CIUT students for the writing of research papers and dissertations.

The pages 14-15 provide samples of cover pages for CIUT research papers and dissertations.

VIII. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THESIS/DISSERTATION WRITING

Selecting A Thesis Topic

The research and writing time involved in producing a quality thesis/dissertation is significant. As such we recommend that you select a topic that is of particular interest to you. The more interested you are in a topic, the easier it will be to stay motivated in your research and writing over the months that it will take you to complete the project.

Indeed, rather than provide detailed and specific guidance and a limited number of topic areas from which students may choose, CIUT would rather give great freedom in the choice of topic. As noted above, we expect that this approach will make it easier for students to write in an area of personal interest, but also, we pray and expect that the effort expended in the research and writing of a dissertation will have great and lasting impact on the ministry of the student, as well as significant value for the church locally and globally.

For CIUT students studying at BTS and MTS level in our “In-Country” programs, thesis/dissertation topics must be approved by CIUT’s International Director. For students in CIUT’s Global Campus programs, thesis topics must be approved by the appropriate program director.

Page Requirements

A BTS thesis/dissertation must be in the range of 30-35 pages in length.

An MTS thesis/dissertation must be in the range of 50-70 pages in length.

Your thesis/dissertation must also include a Title Page, Table of Contents (and any other appropriate front matter – see checklist at the end of this handbook) and a Bibliography. These elements are in addition to the required page totals for your thesis. **The required length of other dissertations is given in the program material for each individual program.**

References And Quotations

A minimum of 6-7 different resources are expected in a BTS thesis, while an MTS thesis should contain a minimum of 8-10 different resources.

¹¹ “Student Supplement for the SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition (SBL Press, 2015).
<https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/sblhssupp2015-02.pdf>.

Thesis Advisor

Carey International University of Theology will endeavor to assign each thesis/dissertation student an advisor who will be available to make recommendations to the student as they research and write their thesis. When possible, we strongly recommend that a student submit each section or chapter of their thesis to the advisor for feedback before moving on to the next chapter.

Language of Final Submission

All thesis projects for both the BTS and MTS program are to be submitted in English. It is the responsibility of students from other language groups to arrange for and cover any related costs for the translation of their thesis/dissertation into English.

Carey International University of Theology understands that this may present a burden to its students. Online translation tools are continually improving, but caution must be used, and if such tools are used, it is **strongly recommended** that someone fluent in English and in theological vocabulary be engaged to check and smooth your translation.

IX. SAMPLE CIUT COVER PAGES

Thesis Cover Page

CAREY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THEOLOGY

[TITLE OF YOUR THESIS]

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF CAREY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THEOLOGY
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
[PROGRAM]

BY

NAME

SCHOOL LOCATION E.G. CAIRO, EGYPT

DATE

CAREY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THEOLOGY

[TITLE OF YOUR RESEARCH PAPER]

A PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF CAREY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THEOLOGY
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE

[NAME OF COURSE]

BY

NAME

SCHOOL LOCATION E.G. CAIRO, EGYPT

DATE

I have completed the assigned reading (Signature).

I have applied the material taught in this course in ministry (Signature).

APPENDIX 1. SBL STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*, Second Edition

Compiled by
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PART 1. CITATION AND TRANSLITERATION GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPERS

1.1. Getting Started

The text of this supplement is formatted to match the style of *SBLHS*; thus it follows book style as opposed to term-paper style. All the samples in part 3 of this supplement follow the term-paper style.

Citing works properly is an important component of writing a term paper. Become familiar with the styles for notes and bibliographies illustrated in the second edition of *The SBL Handbook of Style* (*SBLHS*). These general (*SBLHS* 6.2–3) and special (6.3) examples have been chosen with care to cover the broadest array of resources. *SBLHS* provides sample entries for the initial citation of a work in a footnote, subsequent citations of the same work, and the entry for the bibliography at the end of the paper.

When conducting research, check the title page of a source and carefully record all pertinent bibliographic information. Frustrations arise when students are preparing manuscripts and realize that they are missing key pieces of information. In addition to the author and title of the work, students should record the editor, translator, number of volumes, edition, series, city, publisher, and date.

The following material will address problems students typically encounter when working with biblical texts and secondary literature. These illustrations will help students avoid many problems, but they do not replace the need to become familiar with the examples provided in *SBLHS*.

1.2. Biblical Citations

Citations of modern Bible versions do not require publisher's information in either footnotes or bibliography; instead, use the standard abbreviation for the Bible version (e.g., NRSV, RSV, NIV, NASB; see *SBLHS* 8.2). If citing scripture from a single version, include the abbreviation of the version following the chapter and verse on the first scripture reference only. When citing more than one version in a paper, include the version after each citation.

“Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria” (2 Kgs 10:1 NRSV).

When citing specific chapters or chapters and verses, use the standard abbreviated titles of biblical books provided in *SBLHS* 8.3.1–3. If, however, a biblical book is the first word of the sentence, do not abbreviate it. In addition, when referring to the book as a whole or a person with the same name as a biblical book, do *not* abbreviate it.

Correct: Revelation 3 begins with the letter to the church in Sardis.
We know little about the historical Habakkuk.

Incorrect: Rev 3 begins with the letter to the church in Sardis.
We know little about the historical Hab.

Cite biblical verses with chapter and verse(s) using arabic numerals separated by a colon. Do not write out the numbers. When referencing consecutive verses, separate the first and last verse numbers with an en dash, not a hyphen (see *SBLHS* 2.1.3.4).

Correct: John 5:8–9

Incorrect: John chapter five verses eight and nine.
John 5:8-9

When citing multiple passages, list the abbreviated title of each *new* biblical book followed by the chapter number and colon, with all verses in that chapter separated by a comma and space. A semicolon should separate references to subsequent chapters or books. Do not include the conjunction “and” or an ampersand before the last citation. List passages in canonical and numerical order.

Correct: Matt 2:3; 3:4–6; 4:3, 7; Luke 3:6, 8; 12:2, 5; Acts 15:1–5; Rom 1:8–12

Incorrect: Luke 3:6, 8; Luke 12:2
Matt 2:3, 3:4–6; 4:3; Luke 3:6, 8 and 12:2
Rom 1:8–12; Matt 2:3; 4:3, 7; 3:4–6

Further examples of correct and incorrect citations are listed in *SBLHS* 8.2.

In study Bibles such as *The HarperCollins Study Bible* or *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, special articles and the notes (usually at the bottom of the page) are *not* part of the biblical text. Study notes are written by authors or editors whose names are included in the front matter of the study Bible. If these notes are cited, all the relevant information from the specific study Bible should be included.

3. David L. Petersen, “Ezekiel,” in *The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, ed. Harold W. Attridge et al. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 1096.

5. Petersen, “Ezekiel,” 1096.

Petersen, David L. “Ezekiel.” Pages 1096-1167 in *The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated, New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*. Edited by Harold W. Attridge et al. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006.

1.3. Working with Biblical Commentaries

1.3.1. Series Title and Volume Title

Most biblical commentaries appear as part of a commentary series, the purpose of which is to comment upon the biblical text using the same general format. When working with a single volume in a commentary series, follow the citation guidelines for “A Work in a Series” (*SBLHS* 6.2.24). Most commentary series are listed in the abbreviations found in *SBLHS* 8.4.1–2.

When collecting bibliographic information, distinguish carefully between the volume title and the series title. Whether abbreviated or written in full, volume titles are italicized, but series titles are not.

18. Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, trans. John J. Scullion, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 25.

20. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 44.

Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 12–36*. Translated by John J. Scullion. Continental Commentaries. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

1.3.2. Numbered Series or Nonnumbered Series

The publishers of some biblical commentaries number each volume in the series, while others do not. If the series uses numbers (e.g., Anchor Bible or Word Biblical Commentary), the number goes immediately after the name of the series but does not include the word “volume” or its abbreviation.

1.3.3 Multivolume Commentaries

1.3.3.1. Multivolume Commentaries on a Single Biblical Book by One Author. Usually each volume has a separate title for the books and chapters treated in a given volume, as in Wenham’s two-volume commentary on Genesis in the Word Biblical Commentary. The title of one volume is *Genesis 1–15*, and the other is *Genesis 16–50*. In other cases each volume uses the same title and is distinguished only by volume number, using either roman or arabic numerals. The following example of Dahood’s three-volume Psalms commentary is taken from *SBLHS* 7.3.10.

If the paper references all three volumes, cite the entire multivolume work.

4. Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms*, 3 vols., AB 16–17A (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965–1970), 3:127.

7. Dahood, *Psalms*, 2:121.

Dahood, Mitchell. *Psalms*. 3 vols. AB 16–17A. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965–1970.

If the paper refers to only one or two of the three volumes, cite each volume individually.

78. Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I: 1–50*, AB 16 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 44.

79. Dahood, *Psalms I: 1–50*, 78.

82. Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms II: 51–100*, AB 17 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 347.

86. Dahood, *Psalms II: 51–100*, 351.

Dahood, Mitchell. *Psalms I: 1–50*. Vol. 1 of *Psalms*. AB 16. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965.

———. *Psalms II: 51–100*. Vol. 2 of *Psalms*. AB 17. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968.

1.3.3.2. Multivolume Commentaries for the Entire Bible by Multiple Authors. To save space, multivolume commentaries often combine treatments of multiple biblical books into a single volume. A different author usually writes the commentary on each biblical book. In this case, treat each author’s commentary like a chapter in a book written by several authors (*SBLHS* 6.2.23).

Multivolume commentaries cited in a footnote should use the abbreviated title listed in *SBLHS* 8.4.1–2. The author of the section should still be cited. The bibliographical entry may provide the complete title and publication information of the larger work or use the abbreviated title, as in the final example below.

1. Patrick D. Miller, *NIB* 6:577.

Miller, Patrick D. “The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections.” Pages 553–926 in *Introduction to Prophetic Literature, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel*. Vol. 6 of *New Interpreter’s Bible*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Miller, Patrick D. “The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections.” *NIB* 6:553–926.

1.3.4 Single-Volume Commentaries on the Entire Bible

Check the resource carefully. Some single-volume commentaries are authored by one individual and are thus cited like any other monograph. Others are edited volumes where more than one person has written the commentary on individual books. In these cases, cite the author of that section of the commentary as you would the chapter in a book with an editor (*SBLHS* 6.2.12).

5. Jack G. Partain, “Numbers,” in *Mercer Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Watson E. Mills et al. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995), 175–79.

8. Partain, “Numbers,” 175.

Partain, Jack G. “Numbers.” Pages 175–79 in *Mercer Commentary on the Bible*. Edited by Watson E. Mills et al. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995.

1.3.5. Series with New Numbers

Occasionally a publisher will restart the numbering of a book series or a journal. When this happens, include the number of the new series, separated from the volume number by a forward slash as illustrated in *SBLHS* 6.2.24.

1.4. Bible Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

Cite the author of the article, not the editor of the work as a whole (*SBLHS* 6.3.6). Most Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias put the author’s name at the end of the article that he or she wrote. If multiple articles from the same source are used, cite the author and article individually in the footnotes. The bibliographical entry may provide the complete title and publication information of the larger work or use the abbreviated title, as in the final example below.

1. Stanley D. Walters, “Jacob Narrative,” *ABD* 3:599–609.

Walters, Stanley D. “Jacob Narrative.” Pages 359–609 in vol. 3 of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Walters, Stanley D. “Jacob Narrative.” *ABD* 3:359–609.

When multiple articles from the same dictionary or encyclopedia have been used, list the work as a whole under the editor in the bibliography, but cite the individual authors and articles in the footnote as above.

Freedman, David Noel, ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

1.5. Abbreviations

Abbreviate titles of journals and book series both in footnotes and in the bibliography; provide a full reference for a reference work such as BAGD in the bibliography.

The SBL Handbook of Style offers two extensive lists of abbreviations for journals, series, and other standard reference works. The first abbreviation list is alphabetized by source (*SBLHS* 8.4.1) and the second by abbreviation (*SBLHS* 8.4.2). If the work you are citing is in these lists, use the standard abbreviation listed.

Note that both lists italicize abbreviations of journal titles and abbreviations based on book titles (e.g., *JBL*, *COS*) but do not italicize the abbreviations of book series (e.g., *WGRW*, *JSOTSup*) or abbreviations based on personal names (e.g., *BAGD*, *BDB*).

If a work is not included in the abbreviation lists of *SBLHS* or some other authoritative resource (e.g., *IATG*, *CAD*), use complete titles throughout or include a list of additional abbreviations on a separate page at the beginning of the paper (after the title page and before the main text).

1.6. Citations of Electronic Sources

As Internet-based publications play a growing role in scholarly discourse, students must familiarize themselves with citation guidelines for electronic sources. Students should consult the detailed instructions for documenting CD-ROM and Internet resources in *SBLHS* 6.1.6, 6.3.10, 6.4.12–15. List electronic sources by the author's name, and enclose the title of the webpage in quotation marks, as you would a journal article. Since pagination will change from printer to printer, do not cite page numbers for online resources. Since many websites change their content frequently, try to include the date the resource was published on the website; *SBLHS* discourages including the date the student last accessed the page (see 6.1.6).

7. R. Timothy McLay, "The Goal of Teaching Biblical and Religious Studies in the Context of an Undergraduate Education," *SBL Forum*, 6 October 2006, <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=581>.

9. McLay, "The Goal of Teaching."

McLay, R. Timothy. "The Goal of Teaching Biblical and Religious Studies in the Context of an Undergraduate Education." *SBL Forum*, 6 October 2006. <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=581>.

1.7. Transliterating Greek and Hebrew Words

- If a student has training in biblical languages, it is preferable to use a Greek or Hebrew font when discussing particular words. When citing Hebrew, use only the consonantal text unless the vowel pointing is necessary for the argument.
- *The SBL Handbook of Style* provides two different transliteration options for Hebrew: an academic style (5.1.1) that makes extensive use of diacritical markings to distinguish subtle differences in sounds, and a general-purpose style (5.1.2). Unless stated otherwise, the general-purpose style is usually adequate for term papers. For transliteration in theses and dissertations, consult specific departmental guidelines. Only one transliteration system is provided for Greek (5.3).
- Students should be careful to use the same transliteration style for all words cited, especially when these words have been found in secondary literature from different publishers. Transliteration styles vary widely among publishers.

- Word-processing software such as Microsoft Word and WordPerfect can insert most diacritical characters. To add diacritical characters in Word, for example, select the “Insert” menu, then click on “Symbol” and choose the appropriate character from the list.
- Fonts for working with Greek and Hebrew are available for download from the SBL website (<http://www.sbl-site.org>; click on the “Educational Resources” tab at the left of the page). To improve font stability and ensure cross-platform performance, the SBL Font Foundation developed a new group of Unicode fonts. Available fonts include those with Hebrew and Greek characters and fonts with all the transliteration symbols. Unicode fonts such as SBL Hebrew require installing particular software before they function properly; refer to the FAQ page for more information (http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/BiblicalFonts_FAQ.aspx).

PART 2. FORMATTING GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPERS

2.1. Margins

Use a one-inch setting for top, bottom, left, and right margins. Set tabs at one-half inch throughout. Do not justify the right margin.

The text of this document has a justified right margin to match the style of *SBLHS* (i.e., book style). All the samples in part 3 of this supplement follow the term-paper style and are set with a ragged right margin.

2.2. Spacing

Double-space all main text except for block quotations. These long quotations (five lines or more) should be single-spaced, indented one-half inch, and set off from the main text above and below by a blank line. Do not enclose a block quotation within quotation marks. See the examples in part 3 and *SBLHS* 4.1.5. For footnotes, see §2.9 below.

2.3. Pagination

- On the first page of the main text, place the page number at the bottom center. For subsequent pages, place the page number at the top right corner. In a thesis, place the page numbers for the first page of each chapter at the bottom center, maintaining subsequent pagination throughout.
- On the first page of each appendix and the bibliography, place the page number at the bottom center. For subsequent pages, place the page number at the top right corner.
- Assign each page a number. Arabic numbers are used for the main text of the paper. Roman numerals are used for material prior to the body of the text (i.e., the front matter: title page, contents, abbreviations page). Do not print the roman numeral “i” on the title page; the front matter after the title page should be numbered beginning with “ii.” Page numbers should appear without any punctuation marks such as periods or parentheses.

2.4. Text Format

Use a 12-point scalable font. Chapter titles and title page should be the same type as the text font. Do not use bold styling except for certain levels of subheadings.

2.5. Paragraph Indentation

The first paragraph of a new section or subsection should be justified to the left margin. Indent the first line of subsequent paragraphs one-half inch.

2.6. Headings and Subheadings

Primary heading:	centered, all capital letters, long titles single-spaced
First-level subheading:	centered, bold, capitalized headline style
Second-level subheading:	centered, capitalized headline style (no bold)
Third-level subheading:	on left margin, bold, italics, capitalized headline style
Fourth-level subheading:	on left margin, capitalized headline style (no bold or italics)

See part 3 below for examples.

2.7. Contents Page

Use the contents page for term papers of fifteen pages or more. See part 3 below for an example.

2.8. Title Page

Use all capital letters on the title page. Center all elements, allowing two inches at the top and bottom margins and approximately two inches between each element. See part 3 for content format.

2.9. Footnotes

For most word processing software, 10-point font is the default setting for footnotes. Footnotes in 10-point font are acceptable for most term papers, provided that the font type is consistent with the normal text of the paper. Some institutions, however, require 12-point font throughout (including footnotes). Especially for theses and dissertations, inquire with your advisor regarding the proper footnote style.

- Separate text and footnotes with a short rule of two inches.
- Indent the footnote number one-half inch, with subsequent lines of the citation justified to the left margin.
- Insert one en space between the number and the footnote text.
- Separate each entry with a single space.
- Maintain subsequent numbering throughout the paper.

- Cite all publishing information available for each source. The order for listing publishing information in notes is: editor, edition, translator, number of volumes, series, city, publisher, and date.
- If you cite two or more works by the same author, subsequent notes should include the author's family name and a shortened title of each work.

7. John Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 115.

8. Van Seters, *Prologue*, 150.

2.10. Biblical References

Publication data for biblical versions is not required in footnotes and bibliographies; simply indicate the version cited in parentheses following the quote. Always use the abbreviated form (e.g., NRSV, NIV, NJPS) listed in *SBLHS* 8.2. If only one version is cited throughout the paper, include the version after the first quotation only. If more than one version is cited, identify the version after each quotation. Versions not included in *SBLHS* 8.2 must be listed on an abbreviations page.

2.11. Bibliography

Use a two-inch top margin. List all sources consulted in alphabetical order, with a blank line between single-spaced entries. The bibliography follows the appendix(es) and is numbered consecutively. The page number goes at the bottom center of the first page of the bibliography and the top right corner thereafter. See the sample bibliography in part 3.

2.12. Citing Publisher and Place Names

Standards for how to cite publisher names are listed in *SBLHS* 6.1.4.1; the same section provides a list of the most common publisher names and places of publication. When abbreviating state names, use postal code abbreviations, as specified in *SBLHS* 8.1.1.

PART 3. SAMPLES

The following pages provide further aids for paper formatting and style. The scope of examples, however, is far from exhaustive. If a particular issue is not covered in this supplement, students should consult *SBLHS* itself, Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (7th ed.), and *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.).

Samples
3.1. *Title Page*

(allow two-inch top margin)

[NAME OF INSTITUTION]

(allow two inches between elements)

TITLE OF PAPER
(DOUBLE-SPACE SUBSEQUENT LINES)

(allow two inches between elements)

SUBMITTED TO [NAME OF PROFESSOR]
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
[COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE]

(allow two inches between elements)

BY
[YOUR NAME]
[MONTH, DAY, YEAR]

(allow two-inch bottom margin)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
First-level subheading (indent three spaces, no dots); titles that exceed one line must also be indented for subsequent lines	2
Second-level subheadings (indent three spaces, no dots)	4
DEVELOPING THE IMAGINATIVE NARRATIVE SERMON IN A LOCAL CHURCH SETTING	6
SERMON OUTLINE	14
CONCLUSION.....	16
APPENDIX 1: BIBLICAL TEXTS.....	17
APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE SERMON	18
BIBLIOGRAPHY	19

Note: The table of contents lists every element of the paper that follows. Use arabic numerals for the main text and roman numerals for the front matter.

Samples
3.3. *Headings*

(two-inch top margin for the first page only)

PRIMARY HEADING
LONG TITLES ARE SINGLE-SPACED ON SUBSEQUENT LINES

The top margin is two inches for the first page only. There are two blank lines between the title and the text (or subheading if there is one). The left, right, top, and bottom margins are one inch. The first pages of chapters are formatted like the primary heading.

Indent the first line of subsequent paragraphs. All main text should be set in a standard 12-point font, such as Times New Roman.

First-Level Subheading

Keep two blank lines between the text of the preceding section and a subheading, regardless of the level. A first level subheading is centered, bold, and capitalized headline style.

Second-Level Subheading

There are two blank lines between the text of the preceding section and the subheading. A second-level subheading is centered and capitalized headline style.

Third-Level Subheading

A third level subheading is on the left margin, in bold, italics, and capitalized headline style. A heading should never be the last text on a page. If necessary, add extra blank space at the end of the page and begin the following page with a heading.

Fourth-Level Subheading

A fourth-level subheading is on the left margin, capitalized headline style.

The page numbers for the noninitial pages of the paper (or chapter) are located at the top right corner. The text of the body of the paper is double-spaced except for blocked quotations.

This is a blocked quotation. It should consist of five or more lines of text and be indented one-half inch. Block quotations should be single-spaced. No quotation marks are used at the beginning or the end of the quote. Double quotation marks within the original matter are retained. The blocked quote is set off by a regular double space before and after the quote. Note that regular spacing resumes after the end of the quotation.¹

After a block quotation, return to double-spaced text justified to the left margin until you finish the paragraph.

Footnotes at the bottom of the page are separated by a two-inch rule.² Maintain subsequent numbering in notes. Make sure a footnote and the text to which it refers are on the same page. When a word processor such as Microsoft Word does not accomplish this automatically, adjust the line spacing to “exactly” on the “paragraph” window.

1. The first line of a footnote is indented one-half inch. A 10-point font is acceptable. Footnotes, unlike the main text of the paper, should be single-spaced.

2. There should be a blank line between each note and a blank en space between the number and the first word of the note.

(two-inch top margin)

APPENDIX 1. APPENDIX TITLE

There should be two blank lines between the title and the text.

Each appendix should have a number and a title, unless there is only one appendix, in which case the appendix does not need a number. Every appendix requires a heading, so if you are including a preexisting document you will need to type a heading (i.e., the appendix number and title) on that document so that it conforms to your numbered appendixes.

An appendix is formatted like the first page of a chapter, using a two-inch top margin. Locate page numbers at the bottom center of the first page of each appendix and at the top right corner of subsequent pages. If the appendix is already numbered, put those page numbers in square brackets. Page numbering for the appendixes is consecutive with the rest of the paper.

Margins for the appendixes should be the same as the rest of the paper. You may need to reduce the content of the appendix to fit the margins.

Samples
3.5. Bibliography

(two-inch top margin)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Leave two blank lines between the title and the first entry. Justify the first line of each entry to the left margin; indent subsequent lines one-half inch. See *SBLHS* 6.2–5 for samples of the correct format. A bibliography consists of one list of the sources—alphabetical, by author—you consulted or cite in the paper. Separate the entries with one blank line. The entries themselves are single spaced. The bibliography follows the appendixes (if any) and is numbered consecutively.

Brown, Colin, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1985.

Dahood, Mitchell. *Psalms*. 3 vols. AB 16–17A. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965–1970.

Harrington, Daniel. “Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies.” Pages 239–47 in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*. Edited by R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg. BMI 2. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

———. “The Original Language of Pseudo-Philo’s *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*.” *HTR* 63 (1970): 503–14.

Jastrow, Marcus. *A Dictionary of the Targumim, The Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*. New York: Judaica Press, 1996.

McKim, Donald K., ed. *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove, IN: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

McLay, R. Timothy. “The Goal of Teaching Biblical and Religious Studies in the Context of an Undergraduate Education.” *SBL Forum*, 6 October 2006. <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=581>.

O’Day, Gail. “Intertextuality.” Pages 546–48 in vol. 1 of *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by John H. Hayes. 2 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999.

Rad, Gerhard von. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Translated by John H. Marks. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1990.