

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

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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](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
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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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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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.