SBL Style Guidelines

SBL Style closely follows Chicago, or Turabian, Style. The following guide includes SBL Style guidelines for formatting papers, citing sources, and working with Biblical texts, supplements, and languages.

Always refer to your professor's expectations and course (or assignment) requirements for specific formatting preferences. This can often be found in the syllabus or assignment description.

General Layout

Use the following information as guidelines for general format:

Title Page:
- All text on the title page should be in ALL CAPS and centered.
- The order of title page items should be:
    - Institution
    - Title of Paper
    - Professor & Course
    - Your Name & Date
- Each item should be two inches away from the next item, with 2 inches at the top and bottom of the page

Page Numbering:
- The title page does not receive a page number.
- On the first page of the text, the page number should be found in the bottom center.
- Page numbers should be found in the top right corner for following pages.
- *If a Thesis:* the above format should be implemented based on chapter (i.e. first page of each chapter/part has page number in bottom center; subsequent pages in top right).

Text Style:
- Use a readable font (preferably serif-style like Times or Palatino); font size should be 12 pt.
- In the text, longer works such as books and journal titles should be italicized. Shorter works such as article and chapter titles should be in quotation marks.

Spacing:

- Double-space text throughout with the exception of blocked quotations.
- Long quotes should be block indented ½ inch; single-spaced and printed without quotation marks. The footnote should follow after the final period.

Headings:

- Each heading should be on its own line with two blank lines between the end of the previous text and the next heading. Do not use orphan headings (i.e. add extra blank line to start heading on next page)

- **First-level subheading:**   **Centered, Bold, Title Capitalization**
- **Second-level subheading:**   Centered, Title Capitalization (No Bold)
- **Third-level subheading:**   *On Left Margin, Bold, Italics, Title Capitalization*
- **Fourth-level subheading:**   On Left Margin, Title Capitalization (No Bold or Italics)

Biblical References & Languages

Biblical Citations:

- Publication information for the biblical version used is not required as a footnote or in the bibliography. Simply use the abbreviation for the version used.
- If you only use one version throughout your paper, only include the abbreviation after the first quote.
- If you use two or more versions throughout your paper, identify the version after every quote.
- Use the standard abbreviation of biblical books when citing chapters and verses. If the book starts a sentence, do not use the abbreviation.
- When you are referring to an entire book instead of a specific verse, do not use the abbreviation.
- When you cite multiple passages, only include the book's abbreviation once, with the verses listed after
    - EXAMPLE: Luke 4:1, 3; 5:2; Rom 9:1-3

Biblical Languages:

- If a student has training in a language, it is best to use a Greek or Hebrew font when discussing a particular word.
- For Hebrew, only use the consonantal text, unless vowel is necessary for the argument being made.

- If using transliteration for Hebrew or Greek, remain consistent and carefully review sources to ensure the same transliteration system is used.

Citations and References

SBL Style uses a superscripted footnote to identify cited material within the text. The footnote number matches to the full bibliographic entry of the source at the bottom of the page. The full bibliographic entry also appears on the Bibliography page at the end of the work.

Footnote numbers in the text:
- Superscript footnotes at the end of the clause or sentence to which they refer.
- Superscripted footnotes should come after any and all punctuation marks.
- Start with the number 1 and move in order throughout your paper.
- Generally, 10 point font is appropriate for footnotes

Notes at the bottom of the page:
- Separate the notes from the text with a solid line approximately 2 inches long beginning at the left margin.
- Indent the first line of each footnote ½ inch. Successive lines of the same footnote should return to the left margin.
- Footnotes are single spaced internally, with an extra line space between notes.
- The note begins with the corresponding number, not superscripted, with a period (i.e., 1.)
- The first reference of a source includes the first and last name of the author (in that order), the title of the work, publication information, and page numbers referenced. The note itself will conform to the specific format required for the type of work referenced.
- When the same source is referenced thereafter, an abbreviated form of the note is provided with last name (only), title or short title in italics, and page accessed.

Bibliography page:
- Use a two inch top margin for the bibliography.
- Title the page BIBLIOGRAPHY, center it on a new page in plain type. Leave two blank lines after the title.
- Single-space entries internally; initial lines are flush left, successive lines are indented ½ inch.
- Add an extra line space between entries.

Bibliographic entries:
- Notes referenced in the text should have a corresponding bibliographic entry.
- Entries are listed alphabetically by last name, not in numeric order.
- When an entry has no identifiable author, refer to it by its title.
- The bibliographic entry includes the same information as appeared in the note at the bottom of the text, but the format is different. The format depends on the type of source referenced. Sample footnotes and bibliography citations are offered below.

Sample Footnotes and Bibliographic Entries

Book

- The second reference to the same source uses an abbreviated note.

Note:

    3. First Last, *Main Title of Book: All Main Words Capitalized* (City: Publisher, year), 32-33.

    4. Last, *Main Title*, 34.

Bibliography:

Last, First. *Title of Book: All Main Words Capitalized.* City: Publisher, year.

Book in a Series (e.g. commentary)

- *Volume titles* are always italicized, Series Titles are not.
- If you use all volumes of a series by one author, cite the entire work instead of each volume.

Note:

    1. First Last, *Title of Volume.* trans. First Last Name, SA (City: Publisher, year), 36.

    2. Last, *Title of Volume*, 39.

Bibliography:

Last, First. *Title of Volume.* Translated by Fist Last Name. Name of Series. City: Publisher, year.

Journal article

- The volume number is not italicized.

Note:

    5. First M. Last, "Article Name in Quotations," *Journal in Italics* 32 (year): 344.

    6. Last, "Article Name," 425.

Bibliography:

Last, First M. "Article Name in Quotations," *Journal in Italics* 32 (year): 340-435.

Web site

- Do not include date accessed

Note:

      7. First Last Name, "Web Page Title," *Name of Site,* Day Month Year, http://www.complete web address/html.

      8. First Last Name, "Web Page Title."

Bibliography:

First Last Name, "Web Page Title," *Name of Site,* Day Month Year, http://www.complete web
        address/html.