What is SBL Documentation?

The Society of Biblical Literature publishes a manual with guidelines for the style, organization, and format of papers written in the fields of Biblical and Early Christian Studies. If you are taking a Bible course, there is a good chance that your instructor will ask you to write your papers in accordance with SBL guidelines. The current (2nd) edition of SBL is very similar to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition, with some notable differences involving references to materials related to Biblical studies.

FORMATTING A PAPER

- Use an academic 12-point font.

- Double-space your document throughout except for block quotes of 5 lines or more.

- Use 1" margins on all sides of the body of your paper.

- Include a title page with 2" top and bottom margin and all elements centered with 2" between them. Write elements out in all caps. (See example below.)

- Center the first page number at the bottom of the page. Align subsequent page numbers in the top right corner.

Examples

Title Page	First Page	Body

Title Page

AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

[PAPER TITLE]

SUBMITTED TO [PROF]
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF [COURSE #] – [COURSE]

By
[AUTHOR NAME]
[MONTH DAY, YEAR]

First Page

Title

Center the first page number at the bottom of the page. Double-space your document throughout. Use an academic 12-point font. Use 1" margins on all sides of the body of our paper.

Center the first page number at the bottom of the page. Double-space your document throughout.

1

Body

2

Align subsequent page numbers in the top right corner. Align subsequent page numbers in the top right corner. Align subsequent page numbers in the top right corner.

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CITING THE BIBLE

Biblical passages are referenced parenthetically within the final punctuation of the sentence. ***Do not*** include Biblical references in footnotes or in the bibliography. Mention the translation if more than one translation is used in the paper.

Examples

> "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom 12:2 ESV).

> The events transpired "in the ninth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth month" (Jer 39:1).

> Luke wrote, "the kingdom of God is among you" (Luke 17:21 NRSV).

NOTE: Do not include sacred texts like the Bible on the reference page unless directed by your professor. For more information, see our "Citing the Bible" handout.

ABBREVIATIONS – BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

See our "Citing the Bible" handout for a full list of biblical abbreviations.

FOOTNOTES

SBL uses footnote citations instead of the in-text parenthetical citations used in MLA and APA. Regardless of whether the author is mentioned in the signal phrase (a phrase that introduces a quotation) or not, quotations and paraphrases are cited using footnotes (or endnotes).

Formatting

- Separate text from footnotes by 2".
- Single-space footnotes throughout.
- Indent only the first line of each entry.
- Insert a blank line between footnotes.
- Use a superscripted number that matches the reference in the text.
- Maintain subsequent numbering throughout the paper.

Examples

The first footnote referring to a source should have complete publication data, but subsequent footnotes for the same source can use a shortened title. Below are some sample citations showing how to reference the work in your first footnote and how to reference the work in subsequent footnotes.

Famous city names (e.g., London) are printed as-is. If it is a less well-known city, include the state, province, or country name as well.

Book with one author (6.2.1)

[15]Name, *Book Title* (Publishing City: Publisher, Year), Page.

[18]Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 127.

[19] Talbert, *Reading John*, 22.

Book with two or three authors (6.2.2)

[4] James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester, *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 237.

[12] Robinson and Koester, *Trajectories*, 23.

Book by more than three authors (6.2.3)

[7] Bernard Brandon Scott et al., *Reading New Testament Greek* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 53.

[9] Scott et al., *Reading New Testament Greek*, 42.

Book with one editor (6.2.6)

[5] Jeffrey H. Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 35.

[9] Tigay, *Empirical Models*, 38.

Book with two or three editors (6.2.7)

[44] Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg, eds., *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), xii.

[47] Kraft and Nickelsburg, *Early Judaism*, xii.

Book with more than three editors (6.2.8)

[4] John F. Oates et al., eds., *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, 4th ed. BASPSup 7; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 10.

[45] Oates et al., *Checklist of Editions*, 10.

Book with both author and editor (6.2.9)

[45]Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Schillebeeckx Reader* (ed. Robert J.Schreiter; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 20.

[48] Schillebeeckx, *The Schillebeeckx Reader*, 20.

Book with author, editor, and translator (6.2.10)

[3] Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, *Grammatica del greco del Nuovo Testamento*, ed. Friedrich Rehkopf, trans. Giordana Pisi (Brescia: Paideia, 1982), 40.

[49] Blass and Debrunner, *Grammatica*, 40.

Translated volume (6.2.4)

[14] Wilhelm Egger, *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology*, trans. Peter Heinegg (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 28.

[18] Egger, *How to Read*, 291.

Article in an edited volume (6.2.12)

[3] Harold W. Attridge, "Jewish Historiography," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg (Philadelphia: Fortress; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 311–43.

[6] Attridge, "Jewish Historiography," 314–17.

NOTE: If subsequent references could be confused with another article by the same author, include the information concerning the editors. For example:

[9] Attridge, "Jewish Historiography," in Kraft and Nickelsburg, *Early Judaism*, 314–17.

A revised edition (6.2.16)

[87] James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), xxi.

[114] Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, xxi.

Reprint of a recent title (6.2.18)

[5] John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983; repr., Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 35.

[15] Seters, *In Search of History*, 35.

Multivolume work (6.2.20)

[5] Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke, eds., *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting*, vol. 1 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, ed. Bruce W. Winter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 25.

[16] Winter and Clarke, eds., *Book of Acts*, 25.

Journal article (6.3.1)

[7] Blake Leyerle, "John Chrysostom on the Gaze," *JECS* 1 (1993): 159–74.

[23] Leyerle, "Chrysostom," 161.

NOTE: For articles written by more than one author, follow the examples above in 7.2.2–3. It is not necessary to include the issue number unless the journal volume is not paginated consecutively (see 7.2.31).

Article in an encyclopedia or dictionary (6.36)

NOTE: This form also applies to an article in a lexicon or theological dictionary if the specific entry is cited in the bibliography.

[33] Krister Stendahl, "Biblical Theology, Contemporary," *IDB* 1:418–32.

[36] Stendahl, "Biblical Theology," 1:419.

Article in a lexicon or theological dictionary (6.37)

For the discussion of a word or a family of words, give the entire title and page range of the article:

[3] Karl Dahn and Walter L. Liefeld, "See, Vision, Eye," *NIDNTT* 3:511–21.

Subsequent entries need to include only the dictionary volume and page numbers:

[147] Dahn and Liefeld, *NIDNTT* 3:514.

Article in a magazine (6.3.9)

[8]Anthony J. Saldarini, "Babatha's Story," *BAR* 24.2 (1998): 28–33, 36–37, 72–74.

[18]Saldarini, "Babatha's Story," 28.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Every source cited in your paper (except for personal communications and sacred texts, such as the Bible) must have a listing on the reference page with full bibliographical information.
- Alphabetize citations by author or by title if no author is available.
- The first line of each citation is not indented. If the citation exceeds one line, tab every subsequent line over by half an inch by adjusting the hanging indent slider on the ruler at the top of your word processor.
- Leave a 2" top margin. Center "Bibliography" (no quotation marks) on the first line.
- Single-spaced entries with a blank line between them.
- Center the page number at the bottom of the first page of the Bibliography. On subsequent pages, align the page number in the top right corner.

Examples

Book with one author (6.2.1)

Last, First. *Full Title*. City: Publisher, Year.

Talbert, Charles H. *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles.* New York: Crossroad, 1992.

Book with two or three authors (6.2.2)

Robinson, James M., and Helmut Koester. *Trajectories through Early Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971.

Book by more than three authors (6.2.3)

Scott, Bernard Brandon, Margaret Dean, Kristen Sparks, and Frances LaZar. *Reading New Testament Greek.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993.

Book with one editor (6.2.6)

Tigay, Jeffrey H., ed. *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

Book with two or three editors (6.2.7)

Kaltner, John, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds. *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages.* RBS 42. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002.

Book with more than three editors (6.2.8)

Oates, John F., William H. Willis, Roger S. Bagnall, and Klaas A. Worp, eds. *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*. 5th ed. BASPSup 9. Oakville, CT: American Society of Papyrologists, 2001.

Book with both author and editor (6.2.9)

Schillebeeckx, Edward. *The Schillebeeckx Reader*. Edited by Robert J. Schreiter. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986.

Book with author, editor, and translator (6.2.10)

Blass, Friederich, and Albert Debrunner. *Grammatica del greco del Nuovo Testamento*. Edited by Friedrich Rehkopf. Translated by Giordana Pisi. Brescia: Paideia, 1982.

Translated volume (6.2.4)

Egger, Wilhelm. *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology*. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.

Full history of a translated volume (6.2.5)

Julius Wellhausen. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*. New York: Meridian Books, 1957. Reprint of *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*. Translated by J. Sutherland Black and Allan Enzies, with preface by W. Robertson Smith. Edinburgh: Black, 1885. Translation of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Reimer, 1883.

Article in an edited volume (6.2.12)

Attridge, Harold A. "Jewish Historiography." Pages 311–43 in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters.* Edited by Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg. Philadelphia: Fortress; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

Introduction, preface, or foreword written by someone other than the author (6.2.14)

Boers, Hendrikus. Introduction to *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology,* by Wilhelm Egger. Translated by Peter Heinegg. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.

Revised edition (6.2.16)

Pritchard, James B., ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Titled volume in a multivolume work (6.2.21)

Winter, Bruce W. and Andrew D. Clarke, eds. *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting.* Vol. 1 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*. Edited by Bruce W. Winter. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Multivolume Work (6.2.20)

Harnack, Adolf. *History of Dogma.* Translated from the 3rd German ed. by Neil Buchanan. 7 vols. Boston: Little, Brown, 1896-1905.

Journal Article (6.3.1)

Leyerle, Blake. "John Chrysostom on the Gaze." *JECS* 1 (1993): 159–74.

Article in an encyclopedia or dictionary (6.3.6)

This form also applies to an article in a lexicon or theological dictionary if the specific entry is cited in the bibliography.

Stendahl, Krister. "Biblical Theology, Contemporary." *IDB* 1: 418-32.

Article in a lexicon or theological dictionary (6.3.7)

In the bibliography, cite only the theological dictionary:

Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament.* Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.