OBLATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
STYLE GUIDELINE
FOR
ACADEMIC PAPERS
AND
FINAL WRITTEN PROJECTS

Summer 2019
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ELEMENTS OF STYLE

The Oblate School of Theology Style Guideline was first written at the request of students seeking guidance about academic writing expectations at Oblate. In response to their request and in an effort to standardize practice across the school, this style guide highlights the most relevant portions of Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 9th Edition*. Students and instructors are encouraged to refer to this document for guidance about page layout, citations, chapter titles and subheadings, and specific requirements for thesis and dissertations. Students who encounter style and formatting challenges not included in this guide should refer to Turabian 9 or to the *Chicago Manual of Style* 17th Edition. Although inconsistencies may remain, this guide is intended to serve as a model of the academic style and formatting required at Oblate.

Elements of style for all papers submitted at the Oblate School of Theology should normally follow the directives contained in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 9th Edition* by Kate Turabian. To make formatting with Word less arduous, Oblate allows a few exceptions to Turabian including page numbering and the format of footnotes. These are described below. Professors may instruct students to use alternative formatting for some assignments.

Students should note that academic papers have a particular style and layout that is much more restrained than other more embellished, colorful, and illustrated publications. Illustrations, table, and charts may be appropriate in academic papers when they add clarity to the content of the paper. See the examples below and consult Turabian as necessary for the appropriate formatting.
The use of proper grammar and syntax is presupposed in every written assignment. Students are encouraged to take full advantage of the spell check and grammar check in Word. Additionally, Oblate provides free access to Grammarly, an online editing platform, to all members of the OST community. For information about Grammarly, see the associate academic dean. Submissions containing numerous grammatical, syntactical, or formatting errors may be returned to the student for revision before being read, critiqued, or graded. The use of a willing and competent proofreader is also recommended. *Students who have notable difficulty with style, grammar, and composition should seriously consider using the services of a professional editor and taking a composition course at a local college.*

The professional nature of an academic paper requires both a computer with Microsoft Word® software and the use of a high-quality printer. Students are encouraged to seek help with computer formatting from the IT director or from the associate academic dean. Although students may choose to use different word-processing software, Oblate only offers support for MS Word.

**PAGE LAYOUT**

The same page layout is required for all class papers submitted at OST unless the professor gives other instructions. (For specific information pertaining to MA theses, doctoral projects, and dissertations, see Final Projects and Theses below.) Times New Roman font is used throughout the text. The main text is 12-point font and double-spaced and left justified, which leaves a ragged edge on the right margin. Footnotes are Times New Roman 10 and single-spaced with an additional space between notes. Page numbers are Times New Roman 12 and
placed in the bottom center of the page. Headers and footers are not used except for page numbers. Margins (top, bottom, right, and left), are one inch.

The first line of each new paragraph is indented one-half inch. The entirety of a box quote is indented one-half inch and is left justified. An extra space is not added after paragraphs or box quotes. *Widows and orphans* (single lines of text stranded on the top or bottom of a page) should be avoided. The occurrence of *widows and orphans* can be controlled by clicking widows and orphans in the paragraph box on MS Word ribbon.

**CITATIONS**

In scholarly and professional work, it is common to use ideas, quotations, and materials from other authors and scholars. This usage occurs in many forms: direct quotations from published works and speeches, a synthesis of another person’s ideas or writings, lyrics, poetry, material found on the internet or a person’s web page, and so on. Professional courtesy and academic integrity require that every use of another person’s work be carefully documented. For information about how to avoid plagiarism, see Turabian 9, section 7.9 “Guard Against Inadvertent Plagiarism.”\(^1\) Intentional acts of plagiarism lead to severe consequences, including failing grades on papers and even expulsion from school.

**Quotations**

A series of words taken directly from another person’s written work or verbal comments must be set off with quotation marks. An ellipse, which is three periods separated by spaces . . . ,

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is used within a quote to indicate that words have been omitted. Ordinarily, Oblate uses the more straightforward “General Method for Ellipses” (25.3.2.2) rather than the “Textual Studies Method for Ellipse” (25.3.2.3). In the general method, an ellipse is not used before or after a quote even if the quote begins or ends in the middle of a sentence. Brackets [ ] are used to enclose any words added to a quote by the student writing the paper. Examples of both are found in the quote below explaining the use of block (or box) quotes:

If the quotation is four lines or fewer, run it into your text and enclose it in quotation marks. If it is five lines or longer, set it off as a block quotation [indented, single-spaced, left justified], without quotation marks. . . . You may use a block quotation for a quotation shorter than five lines if you want to emphasize it or compare it to a longer quotation (25.2).

Notice that you must manually change to single-line spacing for a block quotation, using a block quotation requires you to manually insert an additional single-space line after the quotation and then to return to double-spacing your lines.

**Footnotes**

At Oblate, footnotes rather than in-line citations or endnotes are used in all papers. A variety of software programs, including MS Word, claim to format directly into Turabian-approved style for footnotes and bibliography. Students should not depend exclusively upon such programs since occasionally the software is not consistent with the directives provided in Turabian. Even eturabian.com often confuses editors and authors of articles. Students are responsible for the accuracy of all formatting. At OST, Turabian takes precedence over computer-generated formatting.

When citing a work the first time, use the full citation as described in Turabian. A shortened form is used for all subsequent notes. Shortened forms include the author’s last name and the page number(s). A comma separates the name and page number(s). If more than one
work by an author is cited, list the author’s last name, the shortened title, and the page number(s). If there is no author or editor, a title and page number are required (16.4). For sequential citations of the same source, use a shortened form rather than Ibid. (16.4.2).

If you are referring to the same text repeatedly, as this Style Guide does with Turabian 9, you may use parenthetical notes in place of footnotes, as modeled here (16.4.3).

**Place of Publication**

The place of publication in footnotes and in bibliography entries includes the city and sometimes the state or province. If two or more cities are given, use only the first city. If the city of publication might be unknown or confused with another city, the two-letter postal code abbreviation of the state or province is included. Use current English names for foreign cites.

**Standard Formatting Patterns**

The following are the standard formatting and information required in a footnote for a book (17.1.6) and a journal article (16.1). In these examples, the XX-XX represents the page number(s) of only those pages on which the information cited is found.

**For a Book**

Note Number 
Author’s First and Last Names, *Title of Book: Subtitle of Book* Series [if any] (Place of Publication: Publisher’s Name, Date of Publication), XX-XX.

**For a Journal Article**

Note Number 
Author’s First and Last Names, “Title of Article: Subtitle of Article,” *Title of Journal* Volume Number (Date of Publication), XX-XX.

**Article on a Website:**

Note Number 
First Name Last Name, "Title of Article/Page." Other Contributor(s). Name of Web Site. Last modified Date. accessed date. URL.

A collection of commonly-encountered footnote and bibliography situations is included below.
Exceptions to Turabian in Footnotes

As strange as it seems, the Turabian default in MS Word for footnotes is not consistent with the style outlined in Turabian, *A Manuel for Writers*. Because MS Word is persistent and will re-format notes even after they are saved, Oblate allows students to use the Turabian default with the two modifications: (1) the font in footnotes must be changed to Times New Roman, and (2) a blank line must be added manually between notes. Otherwise, OST follows MS Word Turabian default: footnotes begin with a superscript number, they are left justified with no indentation, in 10-point font, and single-spaced. MS Word automatically inserts a line between your text and your footnotes. There should not be a space between this line and your first footnote. Footnotes are denoted in the main text by using superscripted numbers.

Bibliography

At the conclusion of the paper, a bibliography page lists the sources used in the paper.

The bibliography is entitled BIBLIOGRAPHY (like a chapter title). With the exception of page numbers, the same information is contained in the bibliography as in the footnotes, but the order and punctuation are altered. In a bibliography:

1. Sources are listed in alphabetical order by the author’s (or editor’s) last name, which is therefore placed before the first name and separated from it by a comma. If no author or editor is given, the entry begins with the title.

2. Page numbers are not given for books. However, entire page numbers are given for periodical articles or chapters in a book. Page numbers are preceded by a colon rather than a comma.

3. Periods replace some commas.

4. Parentheses are not used for the publication information.
5. When “Edited by” and “Translated by” follow a title, they are capitalized and spelled out, not abbreviated as in footnotes. When they follow the name of the editor or translator, they are abbreviated.

6. The first line of each entry is flush with the left-hand margin; the second line is indented five spaces. Each entry is single-spaced with an extra space between entries.

   The following is the standard formatting and information required in a bibliography entry for a book.

   Author’s Last Name, Author’s First Name. Title of Book: Subtitle of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher’s Name, Date of Publication.

   When more than one work by the same author, editor, or translator is cited, the entries are alphabetized by the beginning letter of each title, ignoring articles such as a and the. Only the first entry contains the author’s name. In subsequent entries, replace the author’s name with a triple em dash (six hyphens) followed by a period (———.). When the person listed with multiple works is the editor or translator rather than the author, put a comma after the em dash and then the correct abbreviation such as ed. or trans. (16.2.2).

   **Examples of Citations**

   In the examples below, the footnote entry [N] is followed by the bibliographic entry [B].

   **Book with One Author**


   Short form: Garcia-Rivera, 132.

   If the paper cites more than one work by the same author, include a short title.

   Garcia-Rivera, *Community*, 132.

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2 There are many ways to insert a triple em dash in a bibliography. Perhaps the easiest to click Ctrl Alt and the minus sign on the number pad three times.

**Book with Two Authors**


*Short form:* Conners and McCormick, 135.


**Book with Three or More Authors**


**Book with Two Editors**


**Article in a Journal**


*Short form:* Person, 603.

If the paper cites more than one article by the same author, include a short title.


Article in an Edited Book


Chapter in an Edited Volume with Several Authors (16.1)


Biblical Dictionary (17.1.8)


**Biblical Commentaries**

**Single Volume**


**Multiple Volumes**


**Book-length Commentary of One Book of the Bible**


**Book-length Commentary with Series Number**


NB: Please note in this commonly used source that the words Sacra Pagina are italicized only because they are in a language other than English and not because they are the title of the series. A title of a series is not italicized if it is in English.

**Classical Texts**


Editions of the Bible

It is not necessary to list the Bible in your bibliography. Bible citations are not footnoted but put in parentheses after the quote. The edition of the Bible must be indicated by its italicized abbreviation. E.g. (1 Tim 3:12 *NAB*). This is only necessary the first time the Bible is cited if the same edition is used throughout your text. If you cite more than one edition of the Bible, it must be clear which edition you are citing each time. You must also be consistent in using the abbreviations for the books of the Bible designated by the edition of the Bible which you are using.

Catholic Church Documents

Papal Documents


NB: Please note that the title Pope is not used in footnotes or in the bibliography.

Canon Law

The 1917 Code of Canon Law


Short form: CIC17.
The 1983 Code of Canon Law


Short form: CIC83.


Commentary on the Code


The Catechism


Short form: CCC, no. 339.

RCIA


Roman Pontifical


The Roman Pontifical is generally not included in the bibliography unless it is part of a separate list of official documents used.

Lectionary


Second Vatican Council Documents


Short form for subsequent citations of the same document:
N: Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes, no. 48.

Short form for subsequent citations from a different document (first mention):
N: Second Vatican Council, Ad Gentes, no. 12, Flannery, Vatican Council II.

**USCCB Documents**


N.B. Before 2001, the US bishops acting jointly were known as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and their documents were published by the United States Catholic Conference. Thus these titles should be used respectively for ‘author’ and publisher of the bishops’ documents before 2001, as the documents themselves should make clear.


**Electronic Media**

**eBooks**

NB: Note that the access date comes before the URL. Break URLs after a backslash (preferred) or dash. Do not include a URL for an eBook. Hyperlinks are in black type and not underlined.


N: Malcolm Gladwell, Outliers: The Story of Success (Boston: Little, Brown, 2008), Kindle location 193, Kindle.


Journal Articles

NB: Note that the access date comes before the URL.


Religious Documents


Shortened footnote (for subsequent citations):

N: Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate, 103.


3 Turabian, Kindle Locations 4566-4575.
Websites

NB: Note that websites are not included in the bibliography unless a particular one is cited frequently or is essential to your argument.


CHAPTER TITLES AND SUBHEADINGS

Most academic papers of several pages are generally written in sections and subsections. Longer papers may require two or more chapters. If the paper is written with chapters, a table of

---

4 Turabian, Kindle Locations 6314-6330.
Contents is required. A table of contents may be included in shorter works to give a visual overview of the content of the paper. To help maintain consistency throughout a paper and to automate the table of contents, students are encouraged to use the Styles function on the MS Word ribbon to format chapter titles and subheadings.

Chapter titles begin 1 ½ inch below the paper edge on a new page. Chapter titles are Times New Roman, centered, 14-point font, all caps (no boldface). The chapter number is spelled out with the descriptive title doubled spaced below. So that your two-line title shows up on one line in your table of contents, use a ‘soft return’ (Shift+Enter) between the lines of the title in the body of the document, instead of Enter. An example and the MS Word style settings are below. Note that in MS Word, chapter titles are level one subheadings.

CHAPTER ONE

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Font: Times New Roman, 14 pt, Centered, Black
Before: 36 pt (this setting provides the 1 ½ inch from the top of the page)
After: 24 pt
Keep with next, Level 1
Line spacing: double

Subheadings serve to divide a large unit of text into two or more smaller units and are printed in a uniform manner at the same subdivision level throughout the text. Do not use subheadings to set off a single unit of text. In other words, a single use of a subheading is not permitted. Below is a recommended set of subheadings.
Students are encouraged to ask for formatting help from the IT director or the associate academic dean. Additionally, demonstrations of how to format papers and use Styles to automate a table of contents can be found in numerous places online.

FINAL PROJECTS AND THESES

Final projects, dissertations, and theses that are bound and available in our library have a few additional requirements, including printing and formatting. The final copy(ies) submitted to the library for binding must be printed on the appropriate paper. The paper must be white, watermarked, 100% cotton, acid-free, and a minimum of 20 lb. weight.

Final papers include a formal cover page (see example below) and may be printed on one or both sides of the paper. Manuscripts of 25 pages or less, excluding front matter, must be
printed single-sided to allow for the width of the binding. Manuscripts of more than 400 pages must be printed double-sided to ensure they fit in one volume.

Double-sided manuscripts necessitate additional attention to formatting. They require 1.5-inch margins on both the right and left sides of the page. Pages should be arranged following standard principles of recto and verso. Each major section of the manuscript begins on the recto (right-hand) side of the page, (e.g., Title Page; Dedication; Acknowledgements; Contents; Chapter One, Chapter Two, etc; Bibliography). Blank pages can be added to the end of one section to force the next section to begin on the recto side. The copyright page is on the verso (left-hand side or back) of the Title Page. Odd pages (1, 3, 5 in the text as well as i, iii, v in the front matter) appear on the recto side.

The page numbering, in Arabic numerals, bottom center of each page, begins with the first page of the main text and continues consecutively through the entire main text and back matter (appendices, bibliography). The title page and any other pages before the table of contents are not numbered. If there is more than one page after the table of contents but before the main text (such as lists of tables, abstract, etc.), those pages are given non-capitalized Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv) at the bottom center of each page, and should be included in the table of contents. 5

Most final projects, theses, and dissertations will have formatting requirements beyond the scope of this brief style guide, which is meant to be an abbreviation of Turabian 9, which is a simplification of The Chicago Manuel of Style 17. Please consult these primary sources for more complicated questions.

5 For more information about formatting front matter, see Turabian, A.2.1.
SAMPLE PAGES

Title Page for Class Paper

Title Page for Thesis

Table of Contents

Bibliography
Cultivate and Keep the Garden:
An Ecological Reading of Biblical Creation Stories

Janie Smith
TS 9218: Ecological Theology
December 6, 2019
TITLE: ALL CAPS, BOLDFACED
SINGLE-SPACED IF MULTI-LINED
(title is 1.5 inches from top of page, 14pt boldfaced)

(remaining text follows the format as described.)

submitted to the Faculty of Oblate School of Theology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

(triple-spaced)
for the degree of

Master of (name of degree, e.g., Master of Arts (Theology))

by

Name (with previous degrees)
(One-and-a-half inches below candidate name appears the following)

_______________________________
(printed name, with initials), Director
(three line-spaces in between)

_______________________________
(printed name, with initials), Reader
NB: For doctoral papers only, an additional line is added for the third reader

San Antonio, Texas
(centered, two spaces above next line)

Month Year of conferral
(centered)
AGUA ES VIDA:
ECO-MUJERISTA THEOLOGY IN THE BORDERLANDS

Thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Oblate School of Theology

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts (Theology)

by

Elise D. Garcia, O.P.

Maria Cimperman, O.S.U., S.T.L., Ph.D., Director

Linda Gibler, O.P., Ph.D., Reader

San Antonio, Texas

May 2009
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WRITING CONSIDERATIONS: A CHECKLIST

Words
- Correct spelling (including those introduced by typos)
- Word choice
  - Use the right word to make your point and add clarity
  - Do not use words you do not know (including from a list of synonyms)
  - Chose metaphors that enhance clarity

Sentences
- Grammatically correct
- Clear meaning
- Concise (avoid long and run-on sentences)
- One space after terminal punctuation (periods, question marks, etc.)

Paragraphs
- Topic Sentences
- One idea per paragraph
- All material in the paragraph supports or adds nuance to the main idea
- Clear meaning

Quotations
- Cite your sources
- Introduce quotes
  - Whom you are quoting
  - Why her or his voice important (e.g., According to Pat Siemen, the founder of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence, “Nature has rights to exist and flourish.”¹)
- Use quotes to support your point not to make it
- Quote from the original source when possible

Sections
- Introduction
  - State what is in the section
  - State why it is important (how it supports your thesis)
  - The order of the introduction matches the order of the paragraphs in the section(s)
- Paragraphs
  - Order of paragraphs supports the argument
  - Topic sentences outline argument
  - Transitions flow from one paragraph to the next
- Conclusion
  - State what you accomplished in the section
  - State why it is important to your argument
  - Transition to what comes in the next section
Watch for

- Tense agreement
- Number agreement (no singular “they”)
- Clear use of pronouns (avoid pronouns especially in topic sentences)
- Consistent voice (first, second, third person)
- Use of active voice (avoid passive voice)
- Metaphors (avoid violent and unintended metaphors)
- Inclusive language (gender, race, creation)