

## History Department Style Sheet

The Department of History has adopted this style sheet as a general guide for students in the preparation of course papers and honors theses. This guide represents standards that are generally accepted in the history profession for the preparation of manuscripts. Individual professors may have their own specific requirements in addition to or in place of these guidelines. Students should consult with their professors and course syllabi for specific style requirements.

### **Books that historians recommend as guides to research and writing include:**

Booth, Wayne, Joseph M. Williams, and Gregory G. Colomb. *The Craft of Research*. 4th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Marius, Richard and Melvin E. Page. *A Short Guide to Writing about History*. 9th edition. New York: Pearson Education, 2015.

Strunk, William and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th edition. New York: Longman, 2000.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

University of Chicago Press Staff. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 17th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

### **Sources for History Papers**

The papers you write for history courses usually rely on several types of sources: primary sources, secondary sources, synthesis or survey works, and historiographical works. Primary sources are materials (written, oral, visual, or built environment) that were produced during the era your topic covers. For example, a primary source analysis regarding contemporary British opinions of the American Civil War would rely on materials created in the 1860s. Secondary sources are books and articles historians have written about the past. A good secondary source will use other secondary sources as well as primary sources as evidence. Detailed book studies of a particular topic are often referred to as monographs. Synthesis or survey works tend to bring together secondary source literature on a topic, without a lot of new primary source analysis. Historiographical works explicitly aim to survey or analyze the state of the field of a particular subject. Historiographical books and articles cover the history and progression of history writing on a topic. In other words, historiographies organize and compare what other historians have said about a certain topic.

Different assignments will require a different mix of these various sources. You can expect to write research papers (using a combinations of all these source types), document analyses (focusing on primary sources), book reviews (reviewing secondary sources), historiographical essays (analyzing secondary sources), and response or reaction papers (focusing on course readings).

In your research, we expect you to use both books and articles. Above all, you should rely on academic, university-press books and peer-reviewed journal articles. These are materials which have gone through a rigorous process of review by scholars in the field and can generally be trusted to reflect good scholarship.

We do not encourage you to base your papers on encyclopedias (including online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia), dictionaries, and texts aimed at juvenile audiences. Additionally, papers should not rely disproportionately on survey texts (unless that is the assignment).

Online databases and research aids are becoming more substantial. While using these resources is okay, be sure to follow the guidelines mentioned previously about only using academic, peer-reviewed secondary sources. Accredited online services, such as Muse or ERIC, are preferred. Additionally, if your primary sources are coming from an online source, be sure that it is academically or university-linked and trustworthy. Generally, websites and online databases that have the following domain types are reputable: “.org,” “.edu,” and “.gov.” Moreover, be sure to track down the original source of the evidence in order to clarify any citation confusion that may arise.

### **Writing Style Requirements**

- The text must be typed and double-spaced using a 10 point font with 1.5 inch margins on all sides or a 12 point font with 1 inch margins on all sides.
- Endmatter (endnotes and bibliography) and footnotes may be single-spaced. Assigned paper lengths generally assume something similar to Times New roman 12 point font, which produces about 300 words per double-spaced page.
- All manuscript pages should be numbered, beginning with the first page of text.
- Attach a title page with your name, course number and title, semester, department and university names. Title page information should be double-spaced and centered horizontally and vertically.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph (an indent is usually 5 or 6 spaces)
- Do not insert extra line spaces between paragraphs except to denote sections of the manuscript.

### **Editorial Guidelines**

- Improper spelling and poor grammar will negatively influence your grade
- For detailed guidance on grammar and literary style see Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or Turabian *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.
- Use spell-checker. However, remember that the use of spell-checker is not a substitute for thorough proofreading. Your spell-checker does not know that meant “there” when you wrote “their”; “her” instead of “here”; “son” instead of “sun,” etc.
- Time permitting, ask a family member or friend to read your paper. A “fresh” set of eyes might catch and typographical and grammatical errors which you and your spell-checker have missed.

- Titles of books, periodicals, and other self-contained publications must be underlined or *italicized* in both the body of your text and in footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies. Titles of articles must be enclosed within the quotation marks.
- Non-English words must be underlined or *italicized*.
- Do not use an apostrophe with the plural of a decade to refer to years in that decade unless you mean to use the possessive form. For example, “The Civil War was fought in the 1860s,” as distinct from “lincoln’s election was 1860’s major political event,” or “The 1860s greatest catastrophe was the Civil War.”
- Remember that “its” is already possessive and does not take an apostrophe. “It’s” is the contraction for “it is.”
- Avoid using contractions in formal writing. **Wrong:** “Contradictions aren’t used in formal writing, so don’t use them.” **Correct:** “Contractions are not used in formal writing; therefore, do not use them.”
- You may abbreviate commonly used acronyms after first fully identifying them. Example: “The United States and its European Allies established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949.” You may also abbreviate commonly used honorifics, such as “Dr.”
- Avoid passive voice. Make sure that every sentence in your writing has a verb and the subject that is performing the verb’s action. This is active voice, which is preferred in historical writing. Passive voice makes writing wordy and unclear. **Passive:** “Mistake were made.” **Active:** “General Joe made mistakes.”
- Be judicious with your quotes. Unless the assignment requires a certain number of quotes, demonstrating that you can synthesize the information without directly quoting it is preferred. Block quotes can be insightful, but are too often a substitute for good writing. Block quotes do not use quotation marks and are centered five spaces from the margins on both sides.

### Footnotes and Endnotes

Notations in text should be made only with a superscripted number. Example: “Quote.”<sup>1</sup> This number should follow all punctuation - except for a dash. You may use either footnotes or endnotes. Do not cite sources using embedded notes, that is do not use parentheses within the text to refer to your sources. Your word processor should create and edit the footnote/endnote numbers automatically. Whether using *Chicago Manual of Style* or Turabian, footnotes and endnotes have specific rules for citation. Note: pay specific attention when citing government documents and online sources. Refer to grammar and citation references for help.

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<sup>1</sup> Example footnote

Footnotes/Endnotes should guide your readers to sources that directly contributed to your research and the formulation of your ideas. Use citations when you quote a source and when you attribute your ideas to that source. You may also use footnotes to elaborate on a point or further analyze something that did not fit appropriately in the text.

- Examples:
  - 1. Joe Author, *The Book* (City: Publisher, Year); page number(s).
  - 2. Mary Scholar, "This Is An Article," *This Is A Periodical or Journal* 23 (Date of article publication); page number(s).
  - 3. John Writer, "Chapter from A Book," *Edited Volume*, Editor's Name, ed. (City: Publisher, 1997); page number(s).
  - 4. Fred Ideas, "An Article from the Internet," *Journal Name* 45 (Date of article publication online); page number(s); Available from Website address; online; Accessed date.
- Abbreviating Footnotes/Endnotes
  - Do not use IBID to refer to previously cited works or pages.
  - If you cite a source multiple times within your paper, the first footnote/endnote should be complete like the examples above. However, after the first full citation, the footnote/endnote can be shortened by using the author's last name, a shortened book title, and the page number being cited.
  - Example:
    - 1. Joe Author, *The Book* (City: Publisher, Year); page number(s).
    - Author, *Book*, page number(s).

### **Bibliography Entries**

List all entries in alphabetical order by the author's last name. If an entry is more than one line, the second line is indented. If more than one line, individual entries should be single spaced. If there is more than one author, alphabetize by the first author's last name. Double space between entries.

- Examples:
  - Author, Joe. *The Book*. City: Publisher, Year.
  - Scholar, Mary. "This Is An Article." *This Is A Periodical or Journal* 23 (date of article publication); page number(s).
  - Writer John, "Chapter from A Book." In *Edited Volume*, Editor's Name, ed. Page Number(s). City: Publisher, Year.
  - Ideas, Frederick. "An Article from the Internet," *Journal Name* 45 (Date of article publication online); page number(s); Available from Website address; online; Accessed date.

### **Online Research and Resources**

- American Historical Association
  - [www.historian.org](http://www.historian.org)
- Organization of American Historians
  - [www.oah.org](http://www.oah.org)
- H-Net (History Discussion Lists)

- [www.h-net.org](http://www.h-net.org)
- National Council on Public History
  - [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org)
- American Association for State and Local History
  - [www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)
- National Parks Service
  - [www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov)
- The Library of Congress
  - [www.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html](http://www.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html)
- The Smithsonian Institution
  - [www.si.edu](http://www.si.edu)