

Guidelines for Submitting Papers at JP Catholic

(Revised Fall 2011)

Writing a paper to fulfill a requirement for a course offered at JP Catholic represents an *academic* exercise. With this in mind, students should keep in mind the following:

1. *Submitting a paper at a university is a formal affair.* Papers should not be treated like other informal types of writing, e.g., emails, personal letters, journal entries, magazine articles or editorials. Among other things, this means that proper grammar and punctuation must be used. Poor writing can result in the loss of grade points.
2. *Some papers may be deemed “unacceptable”* A professor may deem a paper “unacceptable” if it fails to meet the directions of the paper prompt, represents work that is egregiously sloppy, or if it is grossly deficient in some other way. In this case, the student receives zero points for the assignment in question.
3. *Students should take a “professional” attitude towards writing and submitting papers.* Presentation matters! A work full of typographical errors is simply not acceptable. Likewise, assignments should be printed with clear, readable ink and not handed in as a crumpled, dirty, stained mishmash of papers. Moreover, students should not use emoticons, smiley faces composed of punctuation marks, such as, :) , slang (e.g., “The author busts out with this crazy claim . . .”; “This is a freaking-brilliant point. . .”, etc.) or goofy humor. Paper submissions should *always* use a restrained, professional tone, keeping in mind that a paper is a formal piece of work.
4. *Students must always proofread their papers prior to submitting them.* Since sloppy work may be rejected, students should never turn in a paper without first proofreading it. Specifically, students should always read their papers *slowly* and *out loud* before turning them in for a grade.

NOTE: Failure to comply with *any* of the following may result in the loss of grade points. Students should *always* review these guidelines before handing in any paper for course credit.

1. Instructions and Format Related Issues

- 1.1. *Follow instructions.* Always follow the directions given by the professor for paper assignments. In particular, make sure your paper focuses on the appropriate material.
- 1.2. *Minimum length.* If specified, always meet the minimum length prescribed for the paper. Moreover, when a range of pages is given, consider the minimum number of pages to imply *full pages*. Thus, directions for a 15–20 page paper means that the assignment should *at least* be 15 *full* pages. A paper that is 14 ½ pages (etc.) is of insufficient length. Furthermore, the following are not to be included in the page count (though they may have page numbers):

- 1.2.1. Title page
- 1.2.2. Table of contents (if applicable)
- 1.2.3. Bibliography
- 1.2.4. Appendixes
- 1.2.5. Illustrations or graphs. *If a page contains images that significantly minimizes the amount of text, that page is not included in the page count.*
- 1.3. *Page numbers.* Always include page numbers.
- 1.4. *Proper Format.*
 - 1.4.1. *Chicago Manual Style.* Use the Chicago Manual Style, following the “humanities” style. On the quick guide,¹ be sure to use “Notes and Bibliography” method and not the “Author-Date” system, unless otherwise directed by the professor. In other words, unless specified by the professor, parenthetical references at the end of sentences are to be avoided in general. Of course, in some cases such references are to be used. Be sure to see the special rules for using Scripture and Catholic Magisterial sources described below under *Special Instructions for Writing a Theology Paper.*
 - 1.4.2. Theology students should be careful to consult the *SBL Handbook of Style* for papers written for graduate level courses.
 - 1.4.3. Students are highly encouraged to follow the norms for writing set up by Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style.*
 - 1.4.4. M.A. Thesis projects should conform to the guidelines provided by the Graduate School in Theology. Consult the program manager.
- 1.5. *Font and size of typeface.*
 - 1.5.1. In the body of your paper (not the footnotes), use fonts in size “12”.
 - 1.5.2. Avoid sans serif fonts such as “Arial,” “Helvetica,” and “Tahoma.”
 - 1.5.3. The preferred fonts are “Times New Roman” or “Times” though other serif fonts may be used (“Garamond,” “Perpetua,” etc.).
- 1.6. *Footnotes.*
 - 1.6.1. Footnotes must be in size 10 typeface, in the same font used in the main text of the paper.
 - 1.6.2. Footnotes are *single-spaced* and spaces should *not* be added between them.
- 1.7. *Margins.*
 - 1.7.1. Top and bottom margins must be 1”.
 - 1.7.2. Left and right margins must be 1 ¼”.
- 1.8. *Paragraphs.*
 - 1.8.1. Indent paragraphs three spaces rather than by hitting the tab key.
 - 1.8.2. A paragraph must have *at least* 3 sentences. (This is an academic paper, not a magazine article!)
 - 1.8.3. Do not put extra spaces between paragraphs.

¹ See the quick guide at <http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/572/196182/Newestchicago.pdf>

- 1.9. *Sentences.*
 - 1.9.1. Write in complete sentences (i.e., no sentence fragments).
 - 1.9.2. Students are expected to capitalize the words at the beginning of sentences unless this would otherwise be unwarranted because of the first word used (i.e., a sentence that begins with the word “iTunes”).
- 1.10. *Block quotations:*
 - 1.10.1. Use “block quotations” for quotations that run *four lines or more*. Do *not* use block quotations for shorter quotes.
 - 1.10.2. Make block quotations single-spaced. *Do not* put in all bold typeface or italics.
 - 1.10.3. Do not end a paragraph with a block quotation.
- 1.11. *Titles.* When giving a title from a book, magazine, newspaper, etc., use italics (do not put in quotation marks), e.g., *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Do *not* underline titles—the age of the typewriter has ended! Titles of articles in a book, journal, magazine or other source should be put in quotation marks, with the title of the book, journal, magazine, etc., in italics—e.g., Jacques Derrida, “Différance,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, ed. A. Boss (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1982), 3–27.
- 1.12. *Use of quotations and citations.* Use quotations sparingly, but citations liberally. Summarize the positions of other people and then cite the source.
- 1.13. *Subheadings* are helpful (especially in papers longer than 10 pages). Put them in size 12 font and use bold type face. Subtitles should never run longer than one line. Do not add spaces above or below them.
- 1.14. *Table of Contents.* A Table of Contents can be included (though it should not be considered part of the paper’s page count).
- 1.15. *Title Page.* A Title Page should include (see Sample Title Page at the end of this document):
 - 1.15.1. Name of School
 - 1.15.2. Title of paper
 - 1.15.3. Name of the professor
 - 1.15.4. Course title: include course catalogue number, e.g., Project Management (BUSI 120)
 - 1.15.5. Name of Student
 - 1.16.5. Date submitted (Day, Month, Year)
- 1.16. *Beginning a paper.* Begin the first line of page 1 with the text of your paper. All of the other relevant information has already been given on your title page.
- 1.16. *Binding and Printing.*
 - 1.16.1. *Staples and binding.* Papers must be bound together by a staple or some other permanent form of binding. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that pages do not easily become detached from the assignment.
 - 1.16.2. *Use clearly readable, black ink.* The text of your paper should be printed in black ink that is easy to read. Take a professional attitude towards

presentation. (A paper that has been printed by a printer that is clearly low on ink and thus hardly legible may be deemed “unacceptable”).

- 1.17. *Header.* It is advisable to use a header with your name and the title of your paper. This header should *not* appear on page 1.
- 1.18. *Proof-reading.* Students should never turn in a paper without first proof-reading it.
- 1.19. *Do not email a copy of your paper to your professor.* Never email a paper to a professor *unless you are specifically told to do so.*
- 1.20. *Use professional language.* See #3 on page 1 above.
- 1.21. *Deadlines.* Paper deadlines are not suggestions. Barring a serious tragedy, a late paper is simply *unacceptable* (i.e., partial credit is not to be expected). Students should be careful to finish their papers with plenty of time to account for broken printers, empty ink cartridges, etc. Such problems are not considered extenuating circumstances but should be chalked up to “Murphy’s Law”.

2. Grammatical Issues

- 2.1. *Do not use contractions.* Contractions (“don’t”; “isn’t”; etc.) are not appropriate for an academic paper. Use formal language.
- 2.2. *Opening a sentence.* Sentences should *never* begin with conjunctions such as “And”, “But”, “Also”, etc. When making a transition use, “In addition”, “Furthermore”, “However”, “Nevertheless”, etc.
- 2.3. *Semi-colon.* Know the rules for using semi-colons. If you are unsure about how to use them, avoid them.
- 2.4. *Numbers.* Unless you are writing a business paper citing statistics or financial data, it is generally best to spell out numbers (e.g., not “30” but “thirty”). Years can be listed as numerals (e.g., “1812”, “1968”) though centuries should be spelled out, e.g., “the twentieth century”. When used adjectivally a hyphen should be used, e.g., “a nineteenth-century writer”. Avoid using numerals “20th century”.
- 2.5. *Quotations within quotations.* When quoting a source that contains a quotation mark, use apostrophes instead of quotation marks.
 - The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, “Sacraments are ‘powers that comes forth’ from the Body of Christ” (CCC 1116).
- 2.6. *Em dash (—) and hyphens (-).* A hyphen is *not* an em dash. When using an em dash one does not put a space between the em dash and the word.
 - The fourteenth-century Nominalists argued that the universals—truth, justice, beauty, and so on—do not truly exist.
- 2.7. *Other grammatical rules.* Review William Safire’s helpful satirical survey of grammatical rules² [NOTE: each example *breaks* the rule it describes]:
 - 1) Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read.
 - 2) Don’t use no double negatives.
 - 3) Use the semicolon properly, always use it where it is appropriate; and never where it isn’t.

² Credited to William Safire, “On Language” (*New York Times*, November 4, 1979).

- 4) Reserve the apostrophe for it's proper use and omit it when its not needed.
 - 5) Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
 - 6) No sentence fragments.
 - 7) Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.
 - 8) Avoid commas, that are not necessary.
 - 9) If you reread your work, you will find on rereading that a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing.
 - 10) A writer must not shift your point of view.
 - 11) Eschew dialect, irregardless.
 - 12) And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
 - 13) Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!
 - 14) Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.
 - 15) Hyphenate between sy-llables and avoid un-necessary hyphens.
 - 16) Don't use contractions in formal writing.
 - 17) Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.
 - 18) It is incumbent on us to avoid archaisms.
 - 19) Steer clear of incorrect forms of verbs that have snuck in the language.
 - 20) Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixed metaphors.
 - 21) Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.
 - 22) Never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
 - 23) Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
 - 24) If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times, resist hyperbole.
 - 25) Also, avoid awkward or affected alliteration.
 - 26) Don't string too many prepositional phrases together unless you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.
 - 27) Always pick on the correct idiom.
 - 28) "Avoid overuse of 'quotation "marks."""
 - 29) The adverb always follows the verb.
 - 30) Last but not least, avoid cliches like the plague; seek viable alternatives.
- 2.8. *Know your grammar.* If you do not understand any of the rules in 2.7 above (e.g., what a “sentence fragment” is; the difference between “it’s” and “its”; etc.) be sure to review your grammar. Students are especially encouraged to consult: William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. Fourth Edition. New York, NY: Longman,1979.
- NOTE: In cases where a student demonstrates an inability to write at a college-level the student will be required to take a remedial course of study in order to remain at JP Catholic.

3. Special Instructions for Writing a Theology Paper

3.1. *Citing biblical books.*

- 3.1.1. Though you should italicize other titles, do not do so with Biblical books (Genesis, Exodus, etc.)!

- 3.1.2. *Abbreviations of biblical books.* When citing a Biblical book use the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. (NOTE: there is no period after these abbreviations). When the book is mentioned in the main text, write out the entire title.

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Genesis: Gen | Exodus: Exod | Leviticus: Lev |
| Numbers: Num | Deuteronomy: Deut | Joshua: Josh |
| Judges: Judg | Ruth: Ruth | 1–2 Samuel: 1–2 Sam |
| 1–2 Kings: 1–2 Kgs; | 1–2 Chronicles: 1–2 Chr | Ezra: Ezra |
| Nehemiah: Neh | Esther: Esth | Job: Job |
| Psalms: Ps | Proverbs: Prov | Ecclesiastes: Eccl |
| Song of Songs (<i>or</i> Song of Solomon): Song | | Wisdom: Wis |
| Sirach: Sir | Tobit: Tob | Judith: Jdt |
| Isaiah: Isa | Jeremiah: Jer | Lamentations: Lam |
| Ezekiel: Ezek | Daniel: Dan | Hosea: Hos |
| Joel: Joel | Amos: Amos | Obadiah: Obad |
| Jonah: Jonah | Micah: Mic | Nahum: Nah |
| Habakkuk: Hab | Zephaniah: Zeph | Haggai: Hag |
| Zechariah: Zech | Malachi: Mal | Baruch: Bar |
| 1–2 Maccabees: 1–2 Macc | | |
| Matthew: Matt | Mark: Mark | Luke: Luke |
| John: John | Acts: Acts | Romans: Rom |
| 1–2 Corinthians: 1–2 Cor | | Galatians: Gal |
| Ephesians: Eph | Philippians: Phil | Colossians: Col |
| 1–2 Thessalonians: 1–2 Thess | | 1–2 Timothy: 1–2 Tim |
| Titus: Titus | Philemon: Phlm: | Hebrews: Heb |
| James: Jas | 1–2 Peter: 1–2 Pet | 1–2–3 John: 1–2–3 John: |
| Jude: Jude | Revelation: Rev | |

- 3.1.3. *Citing a biblical book.* When citing the Bible, do not cite the page number in your translation. Simply cite the reference as follows: Genesis 1:1 or, if parenthetical, (Gen 1:1), do not write, “Genesis chapter 1, verse 2” or “God created the world in Gen 1:1”.

- 3.1.4. When *quoting* from a biblical text, do not put the citation in a footnote, but use the abbreviation for the biblical book, with the chapter and verse in a parenthetical reference. Put punctuation marks (e.g., a period) outside of the parentheses.

- Jesus is called the “son of David” (Matt 1:1).

- 3.2. *Citing magisterial documents of the Catholic Church.*

- 3.2.1. *Names of documents.* DO italicize the names of Church documents: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

- 3.2.2. *Catechism citations.*

- 3.2.2.1. One can refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as simply the *Catechism* (note that “the” is not italicized).

- 3.2.2.2. When quoting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, do not put the reference in a footnote. Instead, give a parenthetical citation, using the abbreviation “CCC”. In addition, do not give the page number but the paragraph number. Put punctuation marks (e.g., a period) outside of the parentheses.
- The Eucharist is the “source and summit” of the Catholic faith (CCC 1324).
- 3.2.3. Church documents can be cited from the Vatican website. When citing a church document *do not* cite the web address but the source, appropriate document and paragraph number.
- Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, 11.
 - John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 1.
- 3.3. M.A. student papers
- 3.3.1. M.A. students with questions about formatting should *always* consult the *SBL Handbook of Style*, available here:
<http://library.concordia.ab.ca/services/The%20SBL%20Handbook%20of%20style.pdf>
See the student supplement here:
http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/SBLHS_SS92804_Revised_ed.pdf

Sample Title Page

[NAME OF INSTITUTION]

TITLE OF PAPER
(DOUBLE-SPACE SUBSEQUENT LINES)

SUBMITTED TO
[NAME OF PROFESSOR]
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
[COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE]

BY
[YOUR NAME]

[MONTH, DAY, YEAR]