SPOHP STYLE GUIDE:

Guidelines for Transcribing and Editing Oral Histories

Updated Summer 2019

Original contributing authors to the SPOHP Style Guide include Diana Dombrowski, [**who else?**]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcription is an ethically important part of oral history work because a transcript makes an interview more accessible and usable for a wide variety of reasons. The challenge of transcription is that, simply stated, systems of writing never map perfectly or easily onto the diverse and complex ways that people actually talk. This style guide represents the approach that SPOHP has developed over the years to strike a balance between accurately depicting people's speech without being *so* accurate that the profusion of filler words and false starts makes the transcript unreadably distracting.

At SPOHP, we do not edit interviews; except in rare and specific cases, we archive and transcribe the entire recording. However, it takes several steps and more than one set of eyes on a transcript to ensure its quality and accuracy. As such, transcripts go through a basic three-stage process:

Stage 1 – Draft transcript (dr)

The first draft of the transcript sets the tone for the remaining stages. The more the transcriber can do to make sure everything is formatted correctly, is accurate in both text and headers, and follows our basic grammatical and stylistic guidelines, the easier the rest of the process will be on the people working on the later stages. Pay particular attention below to the information on when to bold problematic sections or mark them inaudible; the more you can do to alert the audit-editor as to where they need to direct their focus, the easier their job will be.

Stage 2 – Audit-edit (ae) and abstract (ab)

This second draft of the transcript is composed by copying the original transcript, and then listening to the audio while reading along with the text and making necessary edits as they become evident. The edits consist principally of the following:

    1 – Accuracy
        Ensuring that what is written corresponds to what was said.
    2 – Formatting
        Making any edits needed to conform with this style guide.
    3 – Focused edits

Paying particular attention to bolded sections or sections marked "inaudible," and making a best effort to address them.

The 4th item is the creation of the abstract, also known as the transcript summary. This is a crucial step and the audit-edit is not complete until there is also an abstract for it.

Stage 3 – Final edit (fe) and abstract review

The third and final stage of the transcript consists of reading over the transcript and making any final formatting edits. However, if the transcript is too problematic or inconsistent, it may be necessary to treat this stage as something like a second audit-edit.

A crucial part of the final edit is also assessing the abstract and editing it as necessary, and then copying it onto a cover sheet for upload to the UF Digital Collections (UFDC). This is the last editing stage before the transcript will be posted publicly to UFDC.

Completing a transcript requires two documents:

1. **The draft transcript**

2. **The abstract, or transcript summary**
   o Detailing significant themes of the interview and including 4-5 keywords.
     ▪ *Example transcript summary and key terms:*
       Dr. Richard Lee Bucciarelli talks about his work in neonatology and his experience working in the Pediatrics Department at Shands Hospital. He saw the creation of the Children's Medical Services program which provided care to children in low-income families. Dr. Bucciarelli also was heavily involved in advocacy in Washington DC and the Tallahassee. He worked as Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and pushed for the creation of a children's hospital at Shands, and finally saw the building of the Shands Hospital for Children.

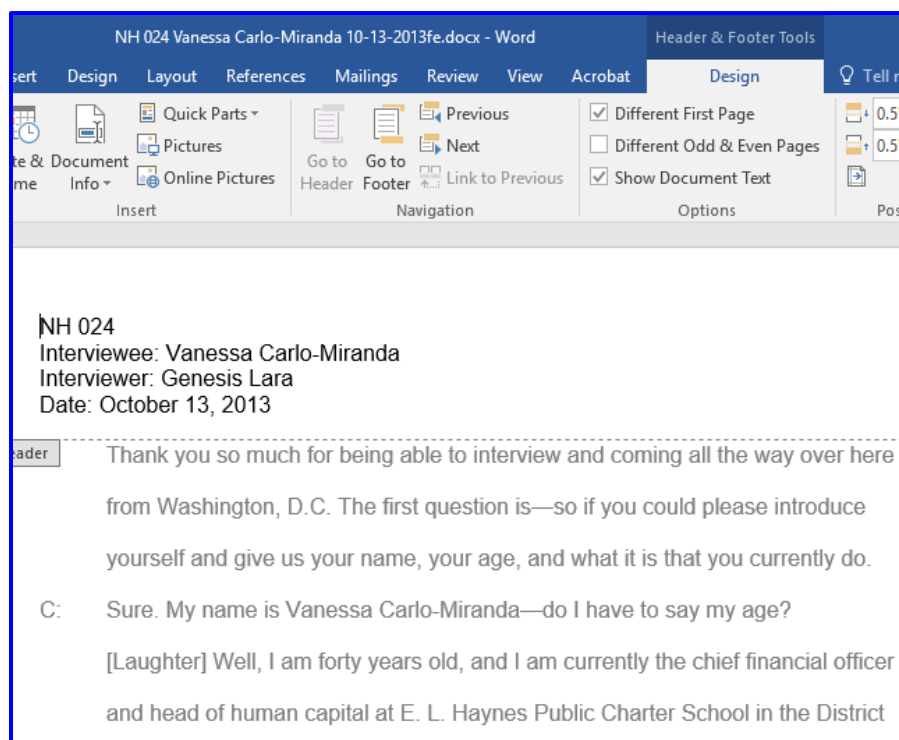Key Terms: Advocacy, Pediatrics, Shands Hospital for Children, Pedicare

FORMATTING A TRANSCRIPT

The first page header:

Should be on the top left of only the first page and should contain the project code number, the name of the interviewee, the interviewer, and the date of the interview.

It should look like this:

UF 999
Interviewee: Roberta Peacock
Interviewer: Paul Ortiz
Date: July 11, 2006

How to add a header in Microsoft Word
1. on the top left of the toolbar click the "Insert" tab
2. then click "Headers"
3. Select the first item in the drop-down box with the text on the **left-hand side.**
4. **Make sure you select "different first page** so that when you start adding page numbers on the second page it will not delete your first-page header.**
5. The headers should be in Arial 12 pt. font

When you are finished adding the header, click "close header" on the top right-hand side of the paper so you can begin typing in the body of the document.

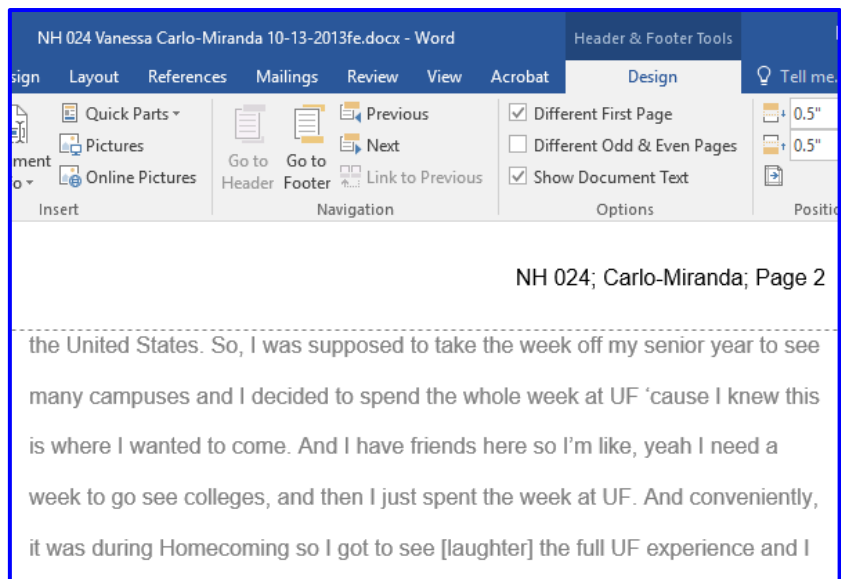**The header on every subsequent page should follow this format:**

The header on every subsequent page should be on the top **right hand side** in this format: Project Code Number; Interviewee's Last Name; Page Number.

It should look like this:

UF 999; Peacock; Page 2

To insert the header and page number on the second page,
1. go back under "insert," tab
2. then click "Page Number."
3. Click on "Top of Page," and select the third item in the drop-down box that displays a number on the right-hand side.
4. within the header, type the project code number; person's last name; page (the number will automatically be added)
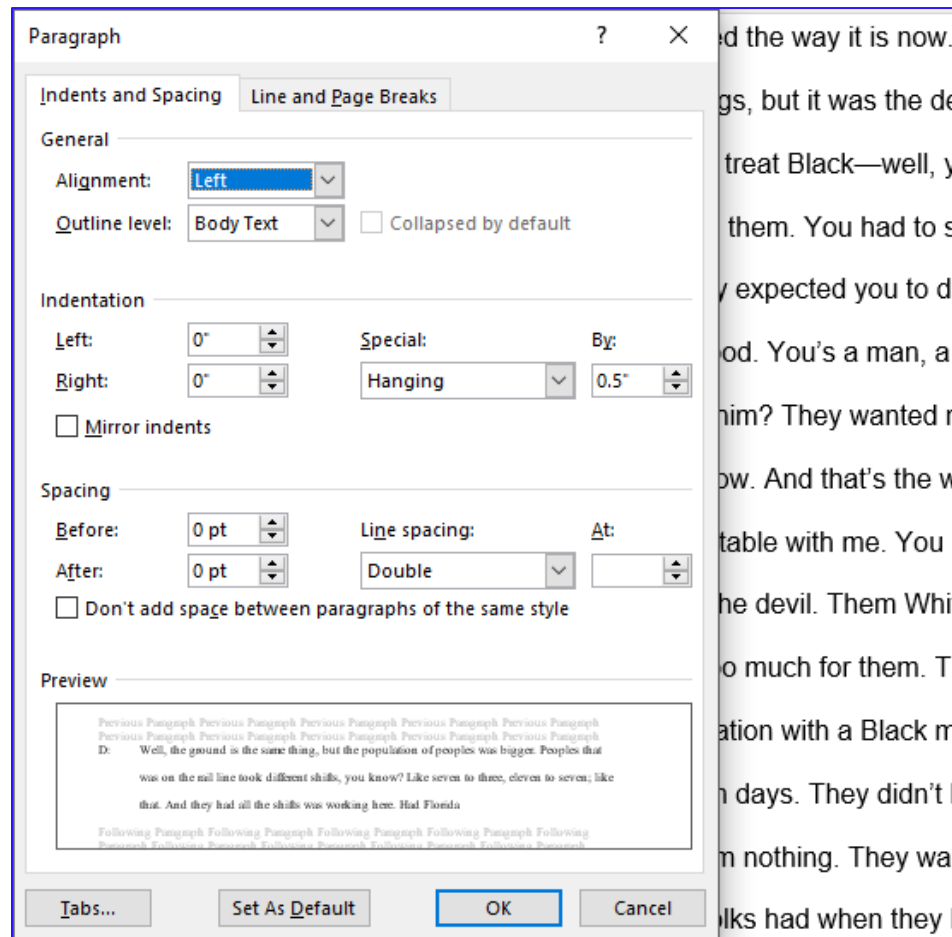

The body of the document
The body should be double-spaced and in Arial 12 pt. font. The paragraph format should be a "hanging" indent set to 0.5 inches. The margins should be set to 1" on all sides (you can check and adjust the margins under the "Layout" tab).

To select a "hanging" indent
1. Click the "Home" tab
2. Click the small arrow to the right of the "paragraph" section. A dialog box should pop up.
3. In the "indentation" section, click the drop-down box under "special"
4. Change from "none" to "hanging"

If you go to Edit and "Select All" (or just press Ctrl+A) to highlight the text, right-click on

the highlighted area, and then choose "Paragraph" from the menu that pops up, you should make sure that what pops up looks like the image you see below in the Indentation and Spacing sections. If these are the settings, then your formatting should be correct.

Initials

Use the first letter of the speaker's last name to denote who is talking. Follow the letter with a colon, and press "tab" to create a large space for the interview text.

If we apply this format to Roberta Peacock and Paul Ortiz, it would look like this:

    O: When were you born?
    P: I was born November 12, 1921.

If both people's last names start with the same letter, use the first letter of the first name also.

    SE: When were you born?
    FE: I was born January 31, 1953.

If someone has a hyphenated last name, use the first letter of the first word. For example, Jane Tomlinson-Smith would be:

> T: I grew up in Athens, Ohio.

If both individuals have the same initials—and we've even had cases where the interviewer and interviewee had the same *name*—then work out a good system that's faithful to the above; you might include their middle initials, or add a number to each (1 vs. 2), or even use "I" for interviewer and "N" for narrator. Remember: the point is to make it as easy as possible for someone reading the transcript to distinguish the speakers, so clarity and consistency are the most important parts of the process.

COMPLETING A TRANSCRIPT

Complete a transcript by marking [End of interview] and signing the document for the stage that you worked on it. It should look like this:

> [End of interview]
>
> Transcribed by: Scott Kraff, August 1, 2012
> Audit-edited by: Diana Dombrowski, August 2, 2012
> Final edited by: Isht Vatsa, August 3, 2012

Here is a sample of what the formatted pages should look like:

D: We caught hell with White folks; that's all that I can tell you there. They didn't let you do too much of nothing here. You go to school, you had to start fighting when you leave school after you hit town. Then they started telling the schools, "If you all get out at three," if the White get out at three, we get out at four. Because of the fighting going all the way to town. I'll tell you that part of it. Mmhm. And we fought the devils coming from school, coming from the [inaudible 00:35], something like that every time. They had to run, had to run from White folks, all of that kind of stuff. And now the boys coming along, want to finish up; they'd be standing, waiting there to jump on us, and we had to fight or either run. Sometimes we fight, sometimes we run. It'd be more of them than it was us. We had to run. But if it was about even, we'd be fighting them, man! Police would stop us. Police would want to know who it was. Policeman's name when I was coming up was [inaudible 1:11]. **Cory** [inaudible 1:15]. He was the chief of police in High Springs. And **he'd stop** them. That's all that I could tell you right there, but it was **really something else here** at that time for Black people.

M: Sounds it. Do you mind if we just introduce the interview, and then kind of talk some more about that?

D: Yeah. Well, so far as that, my daddy was a fireman. I come from a railroad family. My daddy worked for the railroad, my brother worked for the railroad, and I did. The rest of them left. I had ten brothers. And when some got grown, they left High Springs. We two stayed. And my brother just left here. He just moved to Atlanta. He worked for the railroad; see, it was my daddy, my brother, and me.

We worked for the railroad. We stayed in High Springs. High Springs was prosperous when the railroad was here. And when the railroads, when they merged with Seaboard Coastline—that's what it was when I **went to it**. When I first started with the railroad, it was Atlantic Coastline. Then they merged with the Seaboard Coastline. And I got off on disability. I had that in, six or seven—I had twenty-seven years. And I got off on disability, I ain't worked no more since. And then they changed it to what it is now; whatever. I don't know what it is now. I seen it changed from Seaboard Coastline to C&H I think it was. I'm not sure. And then I heard nothing about the railroad too much [inaudible 3:13]. They cut the railroad out here in High Springs. And **probably the reason** why it's being dropped, because there wasn't no work here. No work here to do in High Springs; not too much now. And so, I can tell you about that, now. Most of the peoples now go out of town to work here. Don't have much work in High Springs. We don't have that many people here now anymore. The population was big when the railroad was running.

M: How much bigger was it?

D: Well, the **ground** is the same thing, but the population of peoples was bigger. Peoples that was on the rail line took different shifts, you know? Like seven to three, eleven to seven; like that. And they had **all the shifts was working here**. Had Florida trains running here at that time. And when they merged, they wanted to cut **out** trains **that started** from coal-burning to diesel. And diesel was putting more trains in, putting more coaches in than the coal-burning was. They would throw it in the engine; you firing the engine with coal. But when they put the

Here is a sample of what the end of the transcript should look like:

TRANSCRIBING: FORMATTING and GUIDELINES

INAUDIBLE SPOTS IN RECORDING

- When speech on a recording is inaudible, try playing it at higher volume and/or slower or faster speed. You may also try using a different set of headphones if the headphone quality could be impacting the work. If the interviewer works for SPOHP, ask them for help!
- If you can make an educated guess, type the closest possible approximation of what you hear and **bold it** every time it appears. Try running your approximation through an internet search engine to try to verify your guess (usually for names or place names).
  I went to school in **Maryville**.
  Jane Krackow used to be the department head in English.
- If you cannot make a guess as to what is said, note "inaudible" and the time elapsed in brackets.
  We'd take our cotton to Mr. [inaudible 33:07] gin in Cameron.

BRACKETS

Use brackets to around anything the transcriber adds to the document.
- a pause in recording, when recording is turned off and then on again, when sound fades out, et cetera:
  [Break in recording]
- the end of the interview:
  [End of interview]
- Descriptive terms:

  [Laughter]
  [Crying]
  [Telephone rings]
  [Claps] (if the interviewee or interviewer clap once or a few times for emphasis)
  [Applause] (if the clapping is to recognize or celebrate someone/something)

  ***The general rule** for using these descriptive terms is similar to that of feedback words and sounds (see below on page #): it is usually only helpful to add terms like [Telephone rings] or [Claps] if it is part of the dialogue—that is, if it will be harder to understand the transcript without them.

  Correct:
  D: And he said, "If you don't get out of here, I'll—[Claps]!" So we got out!

  F: At that time, it wasn't—[Telephone rings]—oh, let's just ignore that.

  Incorrect:
  D: I went to the store that day to buy soda. [Telephone rings] It was good!
  (Here, the phone ringing is not part of the narrative and is an extraneous detail.)

The **most notable exception** to that rule is [Laughter]; it is good to include it whenever someone laughs, since people rarely comment on laughter in a narrative, but laughter can play an important role in oral communication.

COMMON QUESTIONS

DO	DON'T
okay	OK, O.K., ok
a lot	alot
et cetera	etc.
yeah	ya, yea
World War II	WWII, World War Two,
for a while	for awhile
a while ago	awhile ago
all right	alright
until, 'til	till
nowadays	now-a-days
apiece	a piece
inasmuch as	in as much as
insofar as	in so far as
predominantly	predominately

IMPROPER GRAMMAR

Do not change improper grammar said by the speaker.
It is okay to leave the following as is:
- Kinda
- Gonna
- Wanna
- Fella
- Double negatives
  I ain't never been in that kinda situation before.

However, be careful of overusing these words or expressions;

DASHES

This dash is known as an "em dash" (—); it is not a hyphen (-) or an en dash (–).

Instances to use the em dash (—)
- an interruption by another speaker

    P: I am from a small town near—

O: What's the name of the town?
P: Gainesville.

- before and after someone interrupts their own narrative

    D: That was back in July—no, wait, it was August—of 1960.

    Q: It was one of those—how would I put it? It was like an epiphany.

- when someone deliberately stops speaking before finishing their sentence

    L: In those situations, sometimes you just had to—. It was what it was.

ELLIPSES

Use ellipses only very sparingly (. . .) when the speaker trails off resulting in a long pause. The ellipses consists of **three** periods, each separated by a space, and separated from the word it follows by a space. In most cases, it is better to use a dash than to use ellipses.

Correct:
B: That was a long time ago, but . . .
A: What were you going to say?
B: I can't really remember that well because it was so long ago.

FALSE STARTS

In general, do not include false starts or repeated phrases. The only exception is if the false start enhances the statement. **Use your judgment** to determine if this rule applies. If omitting the false start changes the meaning of the statement, then it should be left in. However, if it does not, it is likely only to be distracting and should be omitted.

With repeated phrases, also **use your judgment**; if it is only redundant, it is better to omit the repetition. But if the repetition demonstrates a deliberate rhetorical use for emphasis, or otherwise seems meaningful, then it is better to leave in.

Incorrect with false start:
    R: We went—we were going south to the warmer climates.
Corrected:
    R: We were going south to the warmer climates.

Incorrect repeated phrase:
    J: I went to the University of Florida. I went to the University of Florida to study
          mathematics.

Corrected:
J: I went to the University of Florida to study mathematics.

Repeated phrase to keep for emphasis:
K: UF was segregated when I was coming up, but I went to the University of Florida. I went to the University of Florida, and I studied mathematics.

FEEDBACK WORDS AND SOUNDS

Too many interruptions in the flow of a speaker's remarks with feedback (such as um-hm and yeah) is not necessary unless those words are used to answer a direct question.

Incorrect:
S: That was the craziest thing I ever heard!
D: Uh-huh. (D's response is NOT necessary in the final transcript, so it should be omitted).

Correct:
S: That was the craziest thing I ever heard! Don't you think so?
D: Uh-huh. (In this case D's response is necessary in the final transcript, so it should be left in.)

How to spell common feedback or crutch words
- uh-huh = agreement
- mmhm = agreement
- unh-uh = disagreement

FILLER WORDS

If the speaker is constantly using filler words or phrases such as "you know," "like," "know what I'm saying," "and whatnot," etc., most of these can be omitted. However, it is preferable to leave a few (maybe one out of every five) just to help preserve the character of their speech.

Incorrect:
K: You know, I never thought about it that way, but, you know, I can see how, you know, some people might do that.

Correct:
K: You know, I never thought about it that way, but I can see how some people might do that.
Or:
K: I never thought about it that way, but, you know, I can see how some people might do that.

Additionally, you should not omit filler words if they are important to understanding the

meaning of the statement.

Z: It was kind of—you know. I guess you could call it sexist.

DATES

Write full dates as follows:
January 1, 2003
- If the speaker omits the century and just says the decade, write out the full year with the omitted numbers in brackets.
  [19]67 not '67
  The [19]50s, not the fifties *note no apostrophe before the "s"
  The mid-[19]50s, not the mid-fifties
- **Always** use numerals for years, even at the beginning of a sentence.
  1962 was an important year for me.
- Use numerals for days when they include the month and the year; follow this form even when the speaker says, "August the fifth, nineteen eighty-seven."
  Instead write August 5, 1987.
- Spell out the words for the day when the year is not expressed and the speaker uses the ordinal number:
  My birthday is August fifth.
  My birthday is August the fifth.
- Spell out the word for the day when the day precedes the month:
  the fifth of August

SPELLING

Use the spell-checking function in Microsoft Word. However, it does not catch every error, so it is important to proofread. Use the dictionary (or go online to www.merriam-webster.com), or Google terms to verify proper spelling.

COMMON MISTAKES

all right (*alright* is not a word)
all together The children were all together again for Molly's birthday.
altogether (adverb: wholly, entirely, completely) That is altogether unfair.
here I like it here.
hear I can't hear what they said on the tape.
every day I eat lunch every day.
everyday (adjective: common) I think I'll use my everyday dishes for the dinner party.
its (possessive) The cat was chasing its tail.
it's (contraction of *it is*) It's cold outside.
onto (preposition: to a place or position on; upon; on) Paste the label onto the top.
on to Let's go on to Dallas since we've come this far already.
they're (contraction of *they are*) They're going to play rugby in the fall.

there (indicates location) Could you sit over there, please?
their (possessive) The children took off their coats.
to Are you going to school today?
too Did you graduate from UF, too? (Note the comma.)
website (*Web site* is not a word, capitalized or not. Updated AP 2009 style guide)
whenever (conjunction: at whatever time; at any time when) Visit us whenever you like.
whichever Do whichever is easiest. Whichever task you do, do it well.
who's (contraction of *who is* or *who has*) Who's that girl sitting over there?
whose (pronoun, possessive of who or which) Whose umbrella is that?
yeah Note this preferred spelling.

ABBREVIATIONS

In general, avoid abbreviation in oral history transcripts.
Do not abbreviate:
- A civil or military title unless appearing immediately before a person's **full name:**
  Governor Perry, but Gov. Rick Perry
- names of countries, territories, provinces, states, or counties
- *doctor* when used without an accompanying name
  (The doctor said, but Dr. Smith said)
- Senator, Judge, Bishop, General, Professor or any other political, academic, civic, judicial, religious, or military title when it is used alone or when it precedes a surname alone, i.e.,
  Judge McCall
- the Reverend or the Honorable, when "the" is part of the title preceding the name
- books of the Bible
- names of the months and days
- terms of dimension, measurement, weight, degree, depth, et cetera:
  inch, foot, mile
- part of a book: Chapter 3, Section A, Table 7
- word elements of addresses:
  Avenue, Building, *North*, *South*
- except *NW*, *NE, SE,* and *SW*
- portions of company names, unless the actual company name uses an abbreviation:
  Brother, Brothers, *Company, Corporation, Incorporated*, *Limited, Railroad*
- *Senior* or *Junior* when following partial names:
  Mr. Miller, Junior   Mr. Toland, Senior

Do abbreviate
- the following when they precede a given name and/or initial(s) plus surname:
  Ms.   Rev.   Mr.   Mrs.   Dr.
- *Jr.* or *Sr.* after given name and/or initial(s) plus surname: John H. Smith Jr. (note

that the comma is no longer required around *Jr.* and *Sr.*)
- *NE*, *NW*, *SE*, *SW* in addresses given in text (note no periods)
- points of the compass: N, E, S, W, NE, SE, NNW, WSW, et cetera
- era designations: AD 70, 753 BC
- time designations a.m., p.m.
- Agencies and various types of organizations are referred to by acronyms or using an abbreviation from an organization's initials:
  SPOHP, NATO, UN, SEC, AFL-CIO, or AF of L- CIO, SMU, Texas A&M

CAPITALIZATION

As a rule of thumb, when in doubt, **do not** capitalize. Check with *Chicago Manual of Style* or the dictionary to check if it should be capitalized. Proper names of institutions, organizations, persons, places, and things follow standard English practice. Partial names of institutions, organizations, or places are usually written in lower case.

Do capitalize:
- names of particular persons, places, organizations, historical time periods, historical events,
- Biblical events and concepts, movements, calendar terms referring to specific days, and months.
- titles of creative works
- racial/ethnic groups: Black, White, Latina/o/x
- words like "Mother," "Momma," "Dad," etc., *if and only if* they are used in place of the person's name. Otherwise, they should not be capitalized.
  Well, Momma never did care for that kind of thing.
  My momma was a hard-working woman.
- references to athletic, national, political, regional, religious, and social groups:
  Florida Gators, Congress, Democrats, Daughters of the American Revolution, the Masons

Capitalize	Lowercase
Board of Trustees of Baylor	board of trustees, the board, the trustees
the University of Florida	the university
Department of History	the history department
School of Nursing	The nursing school
Course titles: History 1301	Courses: economics, history, philosophy, but
History of Texas	**Proper nouns like French, Spanish**
Microeconomics	**and English are capitalized**
Alachua County, City of Gainesville,	the state bird of Florida
the *New York Times*; the *Times*	the newspaper
regional designations: the West,	directional terms: to travel west, to face

the Southwest	southwest
Central Florida	the central region of Florida
an Easterner, Western American	a western university
West Coast, Gulf Coast	the coast
Interstate 35, IH35 or I-35	the interstate, the highway
Eighth Street	the street
Bible, Scripture(s)	biblical work, scriptural passage
Veterans Administration	the university administration
Veterans Administration Hospital	a veterans hospital
the Institute for Oral History	the institute
the Texas Collection	the collection
the Word of God	the words of the song
the Fall (of Man)	the fall of 1992
the Gospel of Luke	the gospel
the Book of Daniel	a book of poetry
McLennan County Court	county court
Washington Street Bridge	the bridge
American Revolution	the revolution of the colonies
World War I, First World War	the war
General of the Army Douglas MacArthur	MacArthur, a general, U.S. Army
President Harry Truman	the president of the USA, presidency
the Bronze Age	the third of the four ages of man
the Democratic Party	the party that won in that precinct; a democratic form of government
the Democrats (party members)	democracy
Great Depression (referring to 1930s), the Depression	depression
Sherman Antitrust Act	an act of Congress
Grandmother, Grandpa Smith, Dad (when substituted for a given name)	my grandmother, Elizabeth; my mother
U.S. Senate	Florida senate
Capitol (referring to a building)	the capital of Florida (referring to a city)

COMMAS

No, sir.
Yes, sir.
Oh, yes.
Oh, no.
Thanks, Mrs. Pool.
Yeah, that's right. (Note correct spelling of *yeah*)
Well, I'm from California originally.
I was born in Dallas, Texas, in 1904.
I mean, what are you going to do about it?

So we, you know, went back home. *note that "you know" is set off by commas
And, of course, we were pretty angry.
She was, like, my best friend.
Direct addresses are set off by commas
    Pam, I know you will enjoy this.

SCHOLASTIC GRADES

- Type letter grades in capital letters with no period following, no italics, and no quotation marks.
- Show number grade in Arabic numerals with no quotation marks.
- Plural should be formed only by adding *s, (no apostrophe)* except where confusion with another word is possible.

I made all A's by earning 100s on all my exams, but my roommate made only B's.

HYPHENS

For guidance on use of hyphens to form compound words and phrases, please refer first to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, and then to the dictionary.

Hyphenate to indicate division or separation in the following:
- spelling out a name or words, as in H-O-R-A-C-E. Capitalize only where appropriate.
- a fraction expressed in words
    one-fifth

Hyphenate to indicate combination as follows:
- nouns made up of two or more nouns which imply the combination of two or more linked things or characteristics
  astronaut-scientist, AFL-CIO
- when two essential adjectives describe a noun
    He is a small-business owner. (both words describe the business)

- modifiers and adjectival compounds when used **before** the noun being modified, including those formed with numbers:
    a one-of-a-kind student
    a 56-year-old woman

Do not hyphenate
- a compound modifier that follows the noun it modifies unless hyphenated in dictionary:
    Her argument was well balanced.
    She was good-natured.
- a compound modifier that includes an adverb ending in –ly: wholly fictitious
- a proper noun except when absolutely unavoidable
- contractions, such as: can't, wouldn't, don't, didn't, wasn't, he'll, they're, she'd

- chemical terms, as in sodium nitrate, sodium silicate, bismuth oxychloride

ITALICS

Italics should be used sparingly, and they are typically only used when referring to a title of a work.

Italicize:
- titles of whole published works, such as *Plain Speaking*
- titles of books, bulletins, periodicals, pamphlets
- newspaper names and the city names that accompany them:
  New York Times Note: **do not** italicize any articles preceding a newspaper name. Example: the *Times*.
- titles of long poems
- titles of plays and motion pictures/movies/films
- titles of long musical compositions: operas, musical comedies, oratorios, ballets, tone poems, concertos, sonatas, symphonies, and suites
- titles of paintings, sculptures, drawings, mobiles:
  You may know that da Vinci's Mona Lisa is actually *La Gioconda.*
- Italicize titles of legal cases, with *v.* for versus:
  Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas; the *Miranda* case
- names of spacecraft, aircraft, and ships, except for abbreviations preceding the names, such as designations of class or manufacture, as follows:
  SS *Olympic* HMS *Queen Elizabeth* USS *Lexington Friendship VII*
- Consult the dictionary; **do not** italicize a quotation in a foreign language.
- a foreign word or phrase when followed by a translation; enclose translation in quotation marks and precede translation by a comma:
  J'ai mal à la tête, "I have a headache."

NUMBERS

- In general, spell out whole numbers, whether cardinal or ordinal, from one to ninety-nine, and any of those numbers followed by hundred, thousand, hundred thousand, million, and so on, hyphenated or not.
  sixty-nine
  seventy-fifth
  twenty-two hundred, but 2,367. Note: When there are several numbers in a sentence or a group of numbers includes numbers over one hundred, you may use numerals for brevity and consistency.
- Always spell out the number if it is the first word in a sentence.
  A: How old are you?
  B: Fifty years old.

Exception: If the year is the first word in a sentence, **do not** spell it out.
A: When were you born?
B: 1906.

- Spell out the number if it is the name of a street and under one hundred.
  454 Fourth Street
- For percentages, use numerals and spell out "percent."
  Only 45 percent of board members approved of the measure.

Do not spell out:
- street address numbers, highway numbers
  10 Downing Street 304 Carroll Library IH35
- telephone numbers
- fractional sums of money above one dollar: $2.98 (not 2.98 dollars)
- dates:
  735 BC; mid-1950s; AD 1066
  1990s
  February 24, 1997
  July 1997 (no comma)
- time of day—use numerals when a.m. or p.m. follow or when typing a whole plus a fraction of an hour:
   8:20 p.m. but eight o'clock
  7:30 but seven in the morning
- number elements in names of government bodies and subdivisions of 100th and higher, all union locals and lodges
  Thirty-sixth Infantry
  139th Tactical Wing
- parts of a book, such as chapter numbers, verse numbers
- For consistency any sentence which contains numerals pertaining to the same category should have all numerals.
  The report stated that 7 [instead of seven] out of 265 students voted in the campus elections.

Exceptions:
- The sentence begins with a number:
   Seven out of 265 students voted.
- Numbers representing different categories:
  In the past ten years five new buildings of over 125 stories have been erected in the city.

Plurals of numbers:
- Numerals form plurals by adding *s* alone, with no apostrophe: 1920s and 1930s
- When connecting figures with a prefix or suffix, add the hyphen in the appropriate place if the compound word is adjectival. Connect numbers expressed in words to a prefix or suffix with a hyphen: twenty-odd

- The suffix *fold* is an exception threefold

PARAGRAPHS

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program **does not** break up its transcriptions into paragraphs. Everything said should be one block of text, even if topics change or new dialogue is introduced. The only time one should press the "enter" key is if someone new is speaking, and it is never indented. See formatting and page setup for more guidelines.

QUOTATION MARKS

- Quotation marks are used in speech when a direct expression is used by one of the speakers.
  When I was little my mom used to say, "If you study hard in school, I will take you to get ice cream."
  He said, "You're fired." And I said, "We'll just see about that."

- DO use quotes for the names of articles, essays, radio programs, book chapter titles, et cetera.
  Have you seen the article "Sharks" in *National Geographic*?

- Interviewees occasionally coin words, either humorously or to convey a meaning for which they cannot find an existing word. If you cannot find a word in any dictionary but can hear it clearly and can devise a reasonable spelling for it, transcribe it and place it in quotation marks the first time it occurs. Do not use quotation marks for every occurrence of the coined word, however, as it makes for tedious reading

PLURALS

- Compound words formed with prepositions are pluralized by forming the plurals of the first nouns in the compounds:
  fathers-in-law
- Capital letters of the alphabet are pluralized by adding *s* or *'s*: Zs
- Use the apostrophe only where confusion is possible:
  A's, not As
  Lowercase letters form the plural by adding *'s:*
  p's and q's
- Acronym abbreviations are pluralized by adding *s*
  GREs
- When periods are used, add an apostrophe:

B. K.'s
- Proper nouns: Add *s* to the singular if the addition does not make an extra syllable:
  six King Georges
  Add *es* to the singular form if the addition creates an extra syllable:
  six King Charleses
- Nouns—including names of persons—that end in *s* take addition of *es* to form the plural:
  The three Loises are friends with the three Marys.
  The hall was full of Joneses and Martins. Note that the apostrophe is **never** used to denote the plural of a personal name.

SLURS AND DEROGATORY TERMS

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program transcribes interviews accurately for the sake of greater utility to scholars and the general public. If an interviewee uses a slur or derogatory term, write it out as it was used in the interview.

PROOFREAD!

Proofread your transcript. Look for words that the spell-checker may have missed: *form* instead of *from*, *though* instead of *thought*, *you* instead of *your*, et cetera.
If you make a decision on a matter of style in cases where the rules provide no clear guidance or allow for discretion, make sure you follow that decision throughout the transcript. If you verify and correct the spelling of a name, be sure to correct every occurrence.

GUIDE TO AUDIT EDITING

The purpose of audit editing is to make the transcript as accurate as possible and to add in extra information to contextualize both historically and socially topics the speaker is referencing.

Steps in Audit Editing:

- Read the document as you listen to the audio and correct any typos or mistakes where the original transcriber may have not understood what the interviewer was really saying.

- If there are blanks or bolded words in the document and you still cannot tell what the person says, listen to the audio several times on faster and slower speeds for those moments. Also try Googling what you think the words might be to see if you can deduce the true meaning.

- When trying to the correct spelling of someone's name and that person works for a company or institution, try a Google search.

  Ex: Paul Ortiz UF

- If you still cannot determine the word, keep it **bolded.**

- If you cannot make a determination after research and re-listening, note "inaudible" and the time elapsed on the audio in brackets.

  We went to [inaudible 33:05] yesterday.

- Remember, **do not** change improper grammar that was said by the speaker.

  I don't never want to go there again.

NOTE: SPOHP does not include contextualization in its transcripts.

WORK LOG AND PROJECT LOG

WORK LOGS

When you finish your work each day, you must fill out a work log.

Accessing the Work Log

1. Click "My computer" on the desktop

2. Click "Share (S:)

3. Click "Oral History"

4. Click "Oral History New May 2006"

5. Scroll down and click on the "Work Log" folder

6. Click on the excel document "Work Logs" for your group: staff, intern, or volunteer.

7. Click on the tab at the bottom with your name on it

8. Fill in the date, your time in, time out, what project you worked on, and how many hours you worked.

9. Save the document and close the file when you are finished.

Be sure to fill out the work log every day that you work.

PROJECT LOG

When you complete a project, be sure to e-mail the Graduate Coordinators or Volunteer Coordinator to let them know you are finished. They will assign you a new task and update the project log.