Course Style Guide

Please use this style guide for all of your practice files.

Page Formatting:
Please use the templates that we have provided unless otherwise noted. If for some reason the formatting gets altered, use Times New Roman, 12-pt font with single spacing. If the file has more than one speaker, add 1" left indent. Please put one space between sentences, not two spaces.

Paragraphs:
Each paragraph should start on a new line, with a one-line break between it and the previous paragraph. Paragraphs should contain between three to five sentences, depending on the length of the sentences. Each speaker should be a new paragraph.

Single Speaker Files:
For single-speaker files, do not indent the text or add speaker tags. Again, keep the paragraphs to three to five sentences.

Multiple Speaker Files:
When there is more than one speaker, indent and label each speaker with a colon. Try to be as specific with your labeling as possible. Use the speaker's name, if given, in the file name or spoken in the audio. If there is no speaker name given, use Interviewer/Interviewee where applicable. If there is more than one interviewer/interviewee, label Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, etc. in the order that they speak. You may also use Male/Female for non-tracked group files.

Verbatim and non-verbatim
Clean Verbatim:
The majority of our files are clean verbatim which means that we take out *uh*, *um*, non-relevant *like* and *you know*, and stutters.

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If a speaker is using words such as *uh* or *okay* to indicate they are listening but it adds no value to the transcript, leave it out. Also remove any false starts shorter than five or six words that don't add any meaning to the transcript. A false start is when a speaker starts speaking and quickly changes their train of thought.

Please use *uh-huh* or *mm-hmm* for positive confirmation and *mm-mmm* for negative confirmation. Do not include any confirming *uh-huh* or filler statement from a speaker responding to another speaker unless it adds to the conversation.

Strict Verbatim:
If a file is marked strict verbatim, include *uh*, *um*, stutters, false starts, and repeated words.

Handling Slang and Speechy Words:
Transcribe the speaker's words as you hear them even if they are grammatically incorrect. For a cleaner transcript, please change words like *gonna* to *going to*. Use *because* instead of *'cause*.

Run-on Sentences:
Try not to let sentences become too long. It is acceptable to begin a sentence with *and* if a speaker goes on too long and begins every phrase with *and*. Start new sentences as places that make sense.

Marking the audio:
Timestamps:
Please follow the directions on the file for how often to timestamp. Place the timestamp on in between paragraphs.

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Format the timestamps as *[hh:mm:ss]*. For example:

I went to the store.

[00:15:32]

Then I went home.

Inaudibles:
Mark [inaudible] if you can't make out a word. If there is more than one word you can't make out, mark [inaudible phrase]. If you can make an educated guess on a word – for example, it sounds like *blue* – mark it as [blue]. If you're not sure of the spelling, and you've researched it without finding the spelling, type it out phonetically like [blue].

Background Noises:
If there are background noises such as a telephone ringing, applause, or other noises that the speakers comment on or that interrupt the audio, please italicize and mark as *(phone)*, *(applause)*, etc.

Break in Thought:
If someone has a break in thought mark with an em dash. You may have to change these settings in Microsoft Word. Example:
　　　I started to go to the restaurant – my mother's favorite one – when it started raining.

Crosstalk:
If two speakers are talking over each other please put *(crosstalk)*.

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If two speakers interrupt each other, but you can make it out please transcribe as follows:

> Interviewee: I went to the store to –
> Interviewer: What day was this?
> Interviewee: – buy some eggs. This was Thursday.

False start:

A false start is when someone starts a thought but quickly changes it at the beginning of the sentence. Ignore if it's less than five or six words and doesn't add meaning to the transcript.

> Spoken: "I like to – When it's summer I like to go swimming."
> Transcribe as: When it's summer I like to go swimming.

Side conversation:

A side conversation is when a speaker is talking outside of the interview or official subject. This may be casual talk before or after an interview. It could also be an interruption where a participant is speaking with another person outside of the relevant conversation. Mark all side conversations as *(Side conversation).*

Ellipses:

Use ellipses when a speaker is trailing off.

> I suppose that's what he meant to do…