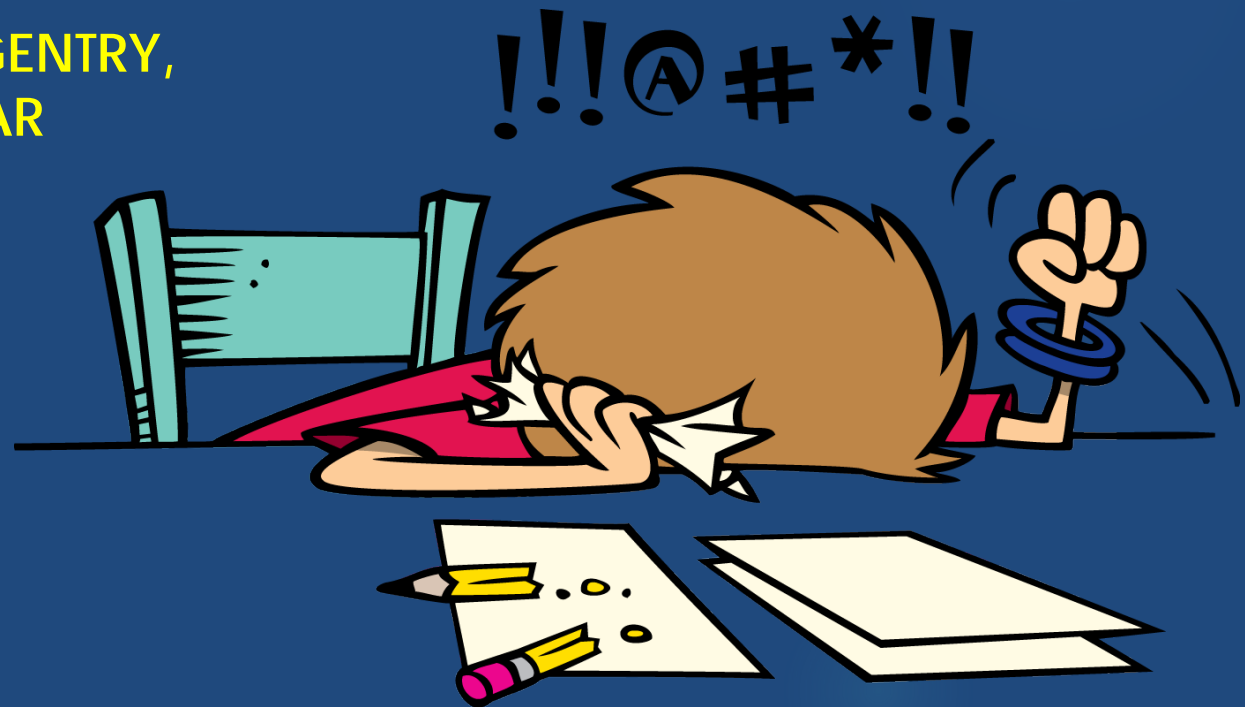


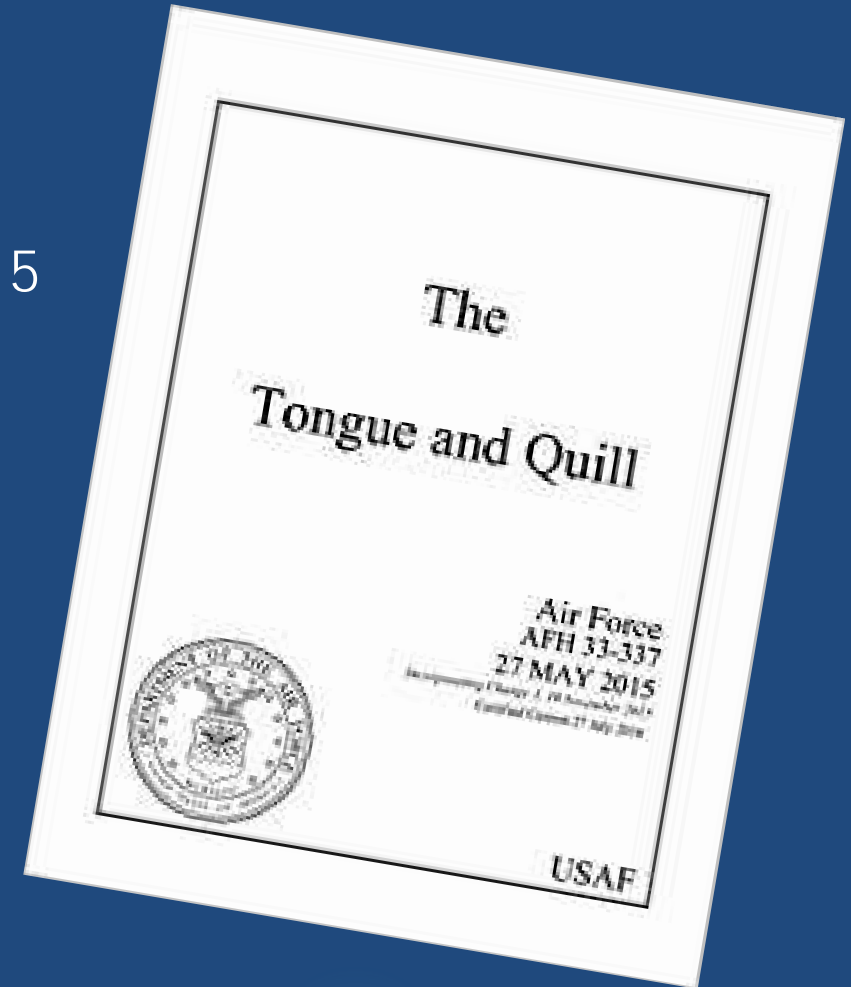
# OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY 101

PRESENTED BY: MSGT DEBRA GENTRY,  
913TH AIRLIFT GROUP, LRAFB, AR



# What Governs the Official Biography?

- ▶ AFH 33-3337 dated 27 May 2015  
Incorporating Change 1, 19 November 2015  
Certified Current 27 July 2016
  - ▶ Chapter 20: The Official Biography  
Pages 257-259



# The Why...

- ▶ No matter your status (officer or enlisted) or how long you have served, you have accomplished many things to get you to your current duty location.
- ▶ Capturing and maintaining your accomplishments in a standard biography format is a powerful tool for making personal and professional connections - just as powerful as any modern social media application - and it can help build cohesion at the unit level.
- ▶ When unit members read the biographies of their leaders, they see more than an official Air Force photograph and a list of facts - **they see the service that shaped their leaders and the excellence they obtained.**

# Getting Started

- ▶ Format: Use [Arial font, size 9] for all text and entries; bold the headings (e.g., **EDUCATION**); use [**Arial font, size 13.5 BOLD**] for the identification line; all line spacing is 1.15.
- ▶ Length: Final drafts should be no more than two pages in length when printed.
- ▶ Use a *single* space after a period or punctuation mark in the narrative

# Associated Press (AP) Style Guidance for Official Biographies

- ▶ Acronyms: Spell out acronyms on first use; minimize the use of military jargon.
- ▶ Adjectives: For brevity, minimize the use of adjectives (e.g., “*successfully* led...”).
- ▶ Months and Dates:
  - ▶ Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. *are abbreviated when used with a day (e.g. Jan. 1, 2015), and spelled out when used only with year (e.g. January 2015)*
  - ▶ March, April, May, June, and July *are always spelled out.*
  - ▶ Use commas to separate the day from the year in the “Month Day, Year” format (March 3, 2014) but not when the day is omitted (March 2014).

# AP Style Guidance for Official Biographies (Con't)

- ▶ Rank: Follows Air Force journalistic style.
  - ▶ Spelled out fully in the identification line using all CAPITAL LETTERS.

**COLONEL DANIEL S. COLLISTER**

- ▶ Abbreviated rank is used in the narrative with the name of the member.

**CMSgt, SMSgt, MSgt, TSgt, SSgt, SrA, A1C, AMN, AB, etc.**

- ▶ Generic rank (e.g., “the colonel” or “the general”) is used when the name is omitted.

# AP Style Guidance for Official Biographies (Con't)

## ▶ State names

- ▶ All states are spelled out completely when they stand alone without a city.
- ▶ Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah *are always spelled out*.
- ▶ Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Vt., Va., Wash., W.Va., Wis., and Wyo. *may be abbreviated when used **with** a city.*

# Official Biography Elements

- ▶ The preparation of an official biography is covered by the Privacy Act; however, the finished product is public domain and must be in agreement with official records.
- ▶ Follow Public Affairs' guidance for the disclosure of contingency operations locations.
  - ▶ In general, forward operating bases are not normally used on an official biography, However, some main operating bases, such as Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan; Joint Base Balad, Iraq; or Joint Base Bagram, Afghanistan, may be used. **If in doubt, use a general term (e.g., Southwest Asia) for the location of a contingency operation.**
- ▶ Do not include the names of family members anywhere on the biography.



# Identification Line

- ▶ Identification Line (“FULL RANK FIRST M. LAST”)
  - ▶ Officer and enlisted. Spell out the full rank and signature block name using **bold font** and all CAPITAL LETTERS (e.g., “FULL RANK FIRST M. LAST”).

**COLONEL DANIEL S. COLLISTER**

Remember  
font type and  
size are **Arial**  
**13.5, Bold**

# First Paragraph

- ▶ Officer and enlisted.
  - ▶ Begins with the abbreviated rank and full name followed by position title (from official records), organization, base and location. Next, provide a brief description of the member's responsibilities in this position.

THE RANK OF O-6  
AND ABOVE IS NEVER  
ABBREVIATED

Colonel Daniel S. Collister is the Deputy Commander, 913th Airlift Group, Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. The 913th Airlift Group is responsible for providing combat-ready Airmen, tactical airlift and agile combat support. The group reports to 22nd Air Force, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, while associated with our host, the 19th Airlift Wing (Air Mobility Command).

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Arial 9

- ▶ Official photograph. The official photograph is placed in the upper right corner of the biography, below the banner, aligned with the top of the first paragraph, and flush with the right margin. **The source photograph file should be of high resolution in a standard 8" x 10" or 5" x 7" format.** Resize the source file to roughly **3.2" wide x 4" high** using a locked aspect ratio and cropping, as required.

4"



3.2"

# Second Paragraph

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- ▶ Officer and enlisted. Briefly describe the member's career: when the member entered the Air Force
  - ▶ Enlisted: **month and year of enlistment** followed by **technical training course attended** and the **month/year of graduation** from technical training;
  - ▶ Officer: **college attended and commissioning source**, **years of service** (active /guard/reserve), **experience** (technical/leadership), **assignment locations (states/countries)** and a **summary of the most significant assignments** (not a "laundry list" of assignments).

Colonel Collister was commissioned in 1998 through R.O.T.C. as a graduate of Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. He earned his pilot wings in 2000 from VT-31 squadron, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas. He has flown the C-130E/H/J and remains an active instructor pilot with over 4,400 hours in the C-130.

- ▶ The final sentence of the narrative, as part of this paragraph or the third paragraph, reads, "**Prior to his/her current position, the (rank) was the (position title, organization, base, and location).**"

# Third Paragraph

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- ▶ Officer and Enlisted [Optional]. Provide information on the member's other noteworthy assignments, contingency operations experience, deployments and flight information, as applicable.
  - ▶ For guard and reserve personnel, this paragraph may include information on the member's civilian profession; however, **do not use the names of companies - be generic** (e.g., "In her civilian capacity, the general is a pilot with a major airline").
  - ▶ If not included in the second paragraph, the third paragraph may simply be "Prior to his/her current position, the (rank) was the (position title, organization, base and location)."

During his time in the United States Air Force, he has participated in Operations Joint Forge, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Odyssey Dawn, Nomad Shadow, Credible Cat, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom's Sentinel. In his civilian capacity, Colonel Collister is a pilot with a major airline. Prior to his current assignment, Colonel Collister was the Commander of the 327th Airlift Squadron, Little Rock AFB, Ark.

# Education

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- ▶ Use **bold font** and all CAPITAL LETTERS for the heading; do not use a colon after the heading.

**EDUCATION**

- ▶ List completed education programs chronologically (first to most recent) by year, type of degree, title of degree/program, institution, city, and state. Include all academic degrees and all professional military education (PME), professional developmental education (PDE), professional continuing education (PCE), and executive courses. For academic programs that merge the type and title of the degree (e.g., "Master of Business Administration" or "Master of Military Operational Art and Science"), use the merged type and title for the entry.
  - ▶ **NOTE:** When the institution name includes the state (e.g., "University of Iowa"), do not include the state at the end of the entry. For non-degree PME, PDE, PCE, and executive courses, list only the year, course, school, location and state. For PME only, add "by correspondence", if appropriate, as shown below.

2007 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

# Sample Education Entries

2002 Bachelor of Science, Aeronautical Engineering, Auburn University, Auburn, Ala.

2003 Air and Space Basic Course, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. ["Air Force Base" is spelled out on first use.]

2006 Master of Science, Logistics Management, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

2007 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

2008 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

2012 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

2013 Master of Military Operational Art and Science, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

2017 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

2020 Doctor of Philosophy, Military History, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa



# Work History (“Assignments”)

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- ▶ Use **bold font** and all CAPITAL LETTERS for the heading; do not use a colon after the heading. List the member’s work history chronologically by month and year entered to month and year departed.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- ▶ Include the official duty title, unit, base and state. (The squadron of assignment is not always necessary, such as while in student status or when the duty title and base sufficiently identify the assignment. If in doubt, include the squadron.)
- ▶ Spell out Air Base (AB), Air Force Base (AFB) and Joint Base (JB) on first use.
- ▶ Do not use a period at the end of an assignment entry unless needed to abbreviate a state (or Washington, D.C.).
- ▶ Spell out the names of all months (*do not follow the AP abbreviation guidance for the names of months in this section*).
- ▶ Capitalize all duty titles (as of October 2011 for all new official biographies).
- ▶ Deployment/contingency experience is placed in parentheses in the same line as the assignment during which the member deployed.

# Sample Assignment Entries

1. Month Year - Month Year, Duty Title, Unit, Installation, State
2. March 2005 - February 2008, Duty Title, Unit, Randolph AFB, Texas
3. February 2008 - July 2010, Duty Title, Unit, Maxwell AFB, Ala. (August 2008 - January 2009, Duty Title, Unit, Balad Air Base, Iraq)
4. July 2010 - June 2011, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.



# Summary of Joint Assignments

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- ▶ This section applies to officer personnel only; delete entire section if no joint assignments.
  - ▶ Use **bold font** and all CAPITAL LETTERS for the heading; *do not* use a colon after the heading. The format is the same as for "**ASSIGNMENTS**" with the addition of rank at the end of each entry. List all joint assignments chronologically (first to most recent) by month and year entered to month and year departed. Include the official duty title, unit, base and state. *Follow Public Affairs' guidance for disclosure of contingency operations locations.*
  - ▶ Do not use a period at the end of an assignment entry unless needed to abbreviate a state (or Washington, D.C.).
  - ▶ Each entry ends with a statement of the rank held for the joint assignment (e.g., "... as a colonel").
  - ▶ Example joint assignment entries
    1. June 2006 - June 2008, Assistant Deputy Directorate for Special Operations, Operations Directorate, the Joint Staff, Washington D.C., as a colonel
    2. May 2008 - May 2010, Commander, Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, as a brigadier general
    3. August 2012 - September 2014, Director, Command, Control, Communications and Cyber (J6), US Pacific Command, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii, as a major general

# Flight Information

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- ▶ This section applies to flight rated personnel only (officer and enlisted); delete entire section if not flight rated. Use bold font and all capital letters for the heading; *do not* use a colon after the heading. List the member's rating, flight hours and aircraft flown. Use a colon with two spaces after the colon for rating, flight hours and aircraft flown.
  - ▶ Rating: Level (none, senior, master, command) and type (pilot, navigator, air battle manager, flight surgeon, flight nurse, astronaut, aircrew member).
  - ▶ Flight hours: Total is approximate (e.g., "More than 2,100") and may include combat time (e.g., "including more than 60 combat hours"). Do not round up—the hours listed should be slightly less than the actual hours.
  - ▶ Aircraft flown: Listed chronologically with the most recent being listed last.
  - ▶ Example flight information entries

Rating: command pilot

Flight hours: more than 2,900 (Use "more than" not "over")

Aircraft flown: T-37, T-38, OV-10, B-52G, B-1B and B-2

Rating: command pilot  
Flight hours: more than 4,600  
Aircraft flown: T-37, T-44, C-130E/H, C-130J

# Major Awards & Decorations

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- ▶ Use **bold** font and all CAPITAL LETTERS for the heading; do not use a colon after the heading. Capitalize (Title Case) the names of all medals and ribbons listed. Accoutrements (devices) are not capitalized (e.g., with bronze star, with two oak leaf clusters, with "V" device). **Never use "one" for a single award.**
- ▶ Officer and enlisted. List the member's major military awards and decorations in descending order of precedence (highest to lowest). **NOTE:** It is customary for officers and senior enlisted members to list only Achievement Medals and higher honors. Lower precedent honors are listed only if significant (e.g., Prisoner of War Medal, Outstanding Airman of the Year Ribbon).
  - ▶ Example major awards and decorations entries
    - ▶ Distinguished Service Medal
    - ▶ Defense Superior Service Medal with two bronze stars
    - ▶ Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
    - ▶ Distinguished Flying Cross
    - ▶ Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters
    - ▶ Air Medal with nine oak leaf clusters
    - ▶ Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster

# Effective Dates of Promotion

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- ▶ Use **bold font** and all CAPITAL LETTERS for the heading; do not use a colon after the heading. List the rank and effective date of promotion using the full rank, month, day and year in AP style.
  - ▶ Officer. List all ranks from commissioning to the current rank held, such as follows:
    - Second Lieutenant June 1, 2000
    - First Lieutenant June 1, 2002
    - Captain June 2, 2004
  - ▶ Enlisted. List all ranks from enlistment to the current rank held as shown below.
    - Airman Basic Sept. 28, 2003
    - Airman March 28, 2004
    - Airman First Class Jan. 28, 2005
    - Senior Airman Sept. 28, 2006
    - Staff Sergeant July 1, 2008
    - Technical Sergeant July 1, 2011

# “(Current as of Month Year)”



- ▶ The current as of date (month and year) are written in sentence case and enclosed in parentheses one blank line below the effective dates of promotion section.
  - ▶ An example current as of date is as follows: **(Current as of August 2014)**

# Optional Entries



## ▶ OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- ▶ List significant other achievements chronologically (first to most recent) by year, followed by a space, and the title or brief description of the achievement.

## ▶ PUBLICATIONS

- ▶ List the publications chronologically (first to most recent) by title and publication data.

## ▶ PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ List current and relevant professional memberships and associations by name only.

# Common Errors

- ▶ Common errors include:
  - ▶ Wrong font size
  - ▶ Wrong line spacing
  - ▶ Picture sized incorrectly
  - ▶ Margins incorrect – standard is 1" margins all around
  - ▶ Wrong information in first few paragraphs (usually paragraphs 1-3)
  - ▶ Use of dates incorrect
  - ▶ The use of "one" when awarded first decoration
  - ▶ Not spelling out AB, AFB, etc. on first use.
  - ▶ Incorrect state abbreviations
  - ▶ Not listing chronologically from oldest to newest
  - ▶ "By correspondence" not used correctly, must use location (i.e., Maxwell AFB, AL)
  - ▶ Duty Titles not in title case format (after 2011, must capitalize)
  - ▶ Date of Ranks do not include "Day"
  - ▶ Unauthorized deployment locations used
  - ▶ Official Biography not updated



# Questions?

- ▶ If you would like me to review your Official Biography after you complete it, please email it to:  
[debra.gentry@us.af.mil](mailto:debra.gentry@us.af.mil)
- ▶ If you have further questions, I can be reached at (501) 987-4842 or government cell at (501) 554-0639.