

Bard

Guide to Creating Closed Captions for Bard College Video

Stay as close as possible to verbatim transcription. Do not edit for clarity, but do follow Bard style guidelines re punctuation, capitalization, etc. In cases where speaking is too rapid to fit on the screen and synchronize with verbatim captions, judicious editing for length is permissible.

If not obvious from introductory slides, put speaker's name in brackets in all caps,* that is, if their speaking begins before their introductory slide/title or they are offering uncredited voiceover. Pay particular attention to when speakers are talking over one another or in quick succession, where speaker 2 begins to speak before their title slide appears and their words could be mistaken by a nonhearing viewer as the words of the previous speaker.

*We have recently changed the style of bracketed information in closed captioning to all caps, so it is not reflected in past videos.

Example: Moderation at Bard College, excerpt below:

[ETHAN BLOCH:] If you want to be a math major or any other major at Bard,

you don't just say, "I want to be a major." You have to go through this process called Moderation.

It's a process by which you and a group of faculty members get together

and, basically, they accept you into the major. [BACKGROUND, KELSEY: Hello. PROFESSOR: Hi, Kelsey.]

[FELICIA KEESING:] The process is designed to help students reflect on why they want to major in a particular field.

[DONNA FORD GROVER:] Many students end up majoring in a discipline that really isn't in sync with what they really want to do.

If speaker's name is required for clarity but is unclear, use a generic title in brackets, for example, PROFESSOR or STUDENT.

Consider what would be unclear to a nonhearing viewer, including notes about background sounds; indicate with the music note symbol when music is playing (♪♪♪). If a voiceover

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includes multiple unknown voices in rapid succession, for example, include that information in brackets. Include notes about applause, laughter, a cheer from the audience, etc.

If there are extended sound effects, like in the instance of music playing, you should not keep the [♪♪♪] frame on screen the entire time; it should drop off after four or five seconds.

Break lines into manageable chunks, synced with the audio, so they are easy to read in the allotted time and space and don't obscure too much of the screen.

When breaking up long sentences, use intuitive gaps and pauses, that is, not in the middle of a phrase.

[YouTube](#) offers an automatic closed-captioning tool within the platform, which requires editing after the fact. [Vimeo](#) does not, though it recommends a few external providers and makes it easy to upload captions. Transcripts, if available, can be uploaded and synced in YouTube, saving time.

Useful details to put in brackets:

[♪♪♪]
[♪ NAME OF SONG, if known ♪]
[APPLAUSE]
[LAUGHTER]
[CHEERS]
[INAUDIBLE]
[MULTIPLE SPEAKERS IN SUCCESSION]

Further Resources

[3Play Media Closed Captioning Best Practices for Media and Entertainment](#) (PDF)

[WGBH Media Access Group Captioning FAQ](#)

[Berkeley Accessibility Hub Captioning Standards and Best Practices](#)