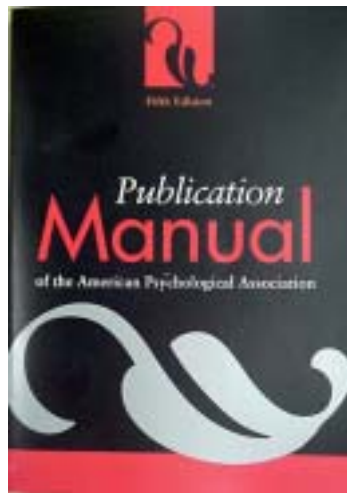


***USING THE WORK AND WORDS  
OF OTHER AUTHORS***

A short guide to APA Style  
for graduate students in Education  
at U.S. universities



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## Using the Work & Words of Other Authors

As a graduate student, you write papers, comprehensives and dissertations that require using, in one way or another, the work of many other authors. Being able to do so effectively and appropriately is an important skill in being a successful graduate student. In the academic world of universities in the United States, the rules governing how and when you may use the ideas and words of others are taken very seriously. Failure to follow them can result in significant disciplinary action, even dismissal from your degree program at the University.

### Why is Using Others' Work so Problematic in the Western Academic World?

There are widely varying cultural assumptions about how knowledge is created and legitimated, and varying norms about the treatment of existing writings by subsequent authors. The Western academic world is highly individualistic and places emphasis on being able to judge and give credit for the work of each student or researcher. "World majority" students from collectivist societies come from nations where one's experiences, thoughts and ideas are interwoven with those of others, both living and dead (Fox, 1994, p. 37). For them, the idea that one must sort out which individual is associated with each idea is both novel and incomprehensible.

In contrast to our [U.S.] emphasis on individual effort and personal success, where children learn to think of themselves as "I" instead of "we," where shades of individual opinion are carefully studied and singled out for praise or criticism, collectivist societies teach that in group harmony lie security, contact, comfort, and identity. (Fox, 1994, p. 36)

Some of you may have been taught that your own words are not important, that scholarship consists of knowing and using the words of well-respected authorities. Others of you may come from cultures where claiming individual credit is inappropriate, where such behavior is seen as putting yourself forward in undesirable ways. For some, writing has always meant finding and using the writings of others. Being a student in a U.S. university may require that you make adjustments in your assumptions about knowledge, ownership and individual work because these may differ from the academic rules for scholarship in U.S. institutions.

Because Western culture is individualistic, it places value on being clear about which individuals created an idea or wrote about it. Similarly, written words are viewed in some sense as belonging to the individual who wrote them. The ownership of written material applies particularly to the specific combination of words and sentences written by an individual. In the U.S. context an author's words can **never** be used by another writer without explicitly acknowledging their source.<sup>1</sup> The need to know whose words one is reading stems from three concerns. Students in the United States are expected to be developing their own skills of analysis and critique as part of the process of forming their own opinions. In order to judge and assess the development of competence in independent thinking, the reader must be able to tell which are the students' words and which are those of someone else. Secondly, for more advanced research work, other researchers may want to locate the original works cited in the text in order to decide if they agree with the author's interpretation or to check the accuracy of the quotations.

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the ethics of scientific publication, plagiarism and public credit for authorship the reader is directed to the appropriate sections in the APA manual (*Publication manual*, pp. 348-350).

A third concern lies in copyright law, which provides legal protection to authors and their works. All published works in the United States are copyrighted giving legal ownership to the publisher or author. Failure to observe copyright rules can result in legal action against those who infringe on the copyright. This ownership is softened somewhat by the "fair use doctrine" which allows short selected portions of copyrighted works to be used for research and education without obtaining permission from the holder of the copyright. Quoting short passages from other authors in papers and research works falls under the fair use doctrine, provided that full information is given about the source of the quoted words.

### **How May I Use the Works of Other Authors?**

There are three ways to use the work of other writers: summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting directly (see discussion in Corbett, 1987, p. 178ff). Each method requires acknowledging that the ideas or words are not yours. The basic principle governing the use of someone else's work has two components: identifying what is not your work, and indicating the source from which it came. As an author, you must make clear to the reader whenever something you write is not your own thinking. In addition, the reader must be able to easily find the source of whatever you have used.

**Summarizing.** When you summarize the major point, the general position, or an overall argument by an author, then a reference to the work as a whole without a page number is sufficient.<sup>2</sup>

In his seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (1972) presents a theory which explains the psychology of oppression and its effects on both the oppressed and the oppressor.

If you summarize material that is well-known and generally accepted in your field of study, there is no need to cite specific sources. For instance, if you describe some background information on when a country gained independence and its basic geography, you would not need to indicate any source. If, however, you went on to provide figures on the population and the size of the primary school age group, you would need to cite a source since the reader would want to know where the data came from in order to assess their accuracy and the methods used to generate the numbers. If in doubt, the simplest thing to do is include the source.

**Paraphrasing.** A common and effective way to refer to an author's ideas is to describe them in your own words, putting emphasis on those parts of the work which are most relevant to your own topic. Paraphrasing must, however, be both **accurate and in your own words**. When paraphrasing another author's ideas in your own words, you must be careful to represent accurately what the author said, providing enough context and detail to insure that your readers get the same meaning as they would by reading the original text.

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<sup>2</sup>Throughout this document, examples are presented in shaded blocks. Each block provides an illustration of the proper use of APA guidelines for a particular task.

Paraphrasing should be in your own words. You cannot paraphrase by taking sentences or phrases and just changing a few words—that is plagiarism. Paraphrasing works best if you read the whole section you wish to refer to several times until it is clear to you. Then put the original aside and try to present those ideas completely in your own words. Paraphrasing **requires** acknowledgment of the source, usually with page numbers.

From Freire's perspective, when poor people resort to violence, they are not the aggressors. For him, the violence was initiated by others, in the form of an oppressive structure which caused the extreme poverty in the first place (Freire, 1972, p. 41).

Sometimes when you are paraphrasing, there will be a word or a phrase which is uniquely expressive of the author's ideas or is an unusual use of the words. Put quotation marks around the phrase and reference the author, date, and page number.

Freire characterizes some acts of charity as a form of "false generosity" because they are made possible by oppressive social and economic structures without which the benefactor would not have the wealth and power to be generous and the recipient would have no need for the charity (Freire, 1972, p. 29).

In this example, the phrase "false generosity" is put in quotation marks because it is a distinctive term coined by Freire and used by him to convey a specific meaning.

**Quoting directly.** Inexperienced authors often make the mistake of using too much direct quotation. Direct quotation should be used sparingly and only when it conveys content or meaning that would be difficult to express without quoting directly. An effective strategy is to paraphrase ideas, with an occasional direct quote of a phrase or part of a sentence to capture precisely what the author said.

For Freire, the concept of dialogue is central to the process of liberation. Those who try to free others by telling them that they are oppressed or exhorting them with slogans are, in Freire's eyes, trying to "liberate the oppressed with the instruments of domestication" (Freire, 1972, p. 52).

Use longer quotes when paraphrasing would not capture unique expressions in the original or when, for purposes of analysis or illustration, you need to have a fuller version of the original. Do not use long quotes as a substitute for your own thinking and analysis. The purpose of writing a paper is to indicate your personal understanding of the material, not to provide the professor with copies of material with which she is probably already familiar. Longer quotes **are** appropriate when you present results of interviews or other primary source material. Quotes that are longer than three lines of text are indented, single-spaced, and separated from preceding text. Do **not** use quotation marks for indented text.

Freire's theory of liberation prescribes a unique role for the oppressed who must accept total responsibility for pursuing the struggle themselves. As he notes,

The oppressed, who have been shaped by the death affirming climate of oppression, must find through their struggle the way to life-affirming humanization . . . . In order to regain their humanity they must cease to be things and fight as men. This is a radical requirement (Freire, 1972, p. 55).

The example above also illustrates the use of **ellipsis points**, that is, using three periods with spaces before and after ( . . . ) to indicate where parts of sentences or whole sentences have been omitted from the quotation. In the case above, the four periods indicate that the remainder of the sentence has been dropped (three periods) and that the sentence ends (one period).

Whenever you copy words directly from another source, even just a few words, they **must** be put in quotation marks (except for longer, indented quotations) to indicate that they are not your words. Quotations must be **exactly as in the original**, even including mistakes that exist in the original—indicated by adding the word [sic] after the error in the original. If you add or change anything in the quoted material you must enclose any change in square brackets [thus]. Look at the example in the quotation from Fox on the first page of this document where [U.S.] indicates an addition to the original.

### **How do I Reference Others' Work Correctly in the Text?**

Dissertations and academic papers in education should be written using the American Psychological Association's style rules as set for the in their style manual (*Publication manual*, 2001).

This short paper provides an introduction to the correct formats for the most frequently used types of resources. For less common or more complex sources please refer to the manual for more complete details. There are two places where you need to provide correct citations: a) in the text and b) in the list of references or bibliography at the end of a document.

The APA style does away with footnotes and endnotes as a way of indicating sources. Instead a short indication of the source is provided in the text and the full citation is included in the list of references at the end of the document. **Footnotes** and/or **endnotes** are used only for comments on the text or extended discussion of an idea that would be too distracting if put in the main text.

**Sources in the text.** References to authors you have read and on whose work you draw are crucial for establishing the soundness of your argument, documenting the intellectual roots of your paper, and showing that you have engaged with the work of others to augment and justify your thinking. When you reference work of other authors, you must give a citation in the text which provides the information needed for the reader to find the full citation in the list of references at the end of the document. The following examples indicate what information you must put in the text to direct the reader to the full citation in the reference list at the end of the document. The reference list must contain **all** the works cited anywhere in the text.

**Single author, author's name in the text:**

Creswell (1994) discusses approaches to research papers.

The date of the author's work is indicated in parentheses as close to the author's name as possible.

**Single author, direct quote:**

Think about paradigms as comprising "both theories and methods" (Creswell, 1994, p. 1).

The reference is placed in parentheses, includes last name **only**, date, and page number, and is included within the body of the sentence. Note that the period is outside the close-parenthesis character; a common error is to place the period before the citation.

**Multiple authors, several citations:**

Two paradigms are mentioned frequently in the literature: the qualitative and the quantitative paradigms (Phillips, 1987; Reichardt & Cook, 1979; Webb, Beals, & White, 1986).

When two or more works are cited, list them alphabetically, separating the references with a semi-colon. When a work is co-authored, use the ampersand - **&** - between their names. When there are three or more authors, use commas between names and the ampersand before the last name.

**Book, no author or editor:**

When writing your dissertation or term papers, be sure to properly cite all references using APA style (*Publication manual*, 2001).

Note that the reference in the parentheses is the first few words of the full title of the book. Use as many words as necessary to easily identify the work in the reference list.

**Journal article:**

Some recent research in Egypt demonstrated the importance of religious and cultural dimensions in understanding educational systems and planning for their development (Cook, 2001).

This example refers to the specific work of an author and therefore requires a reference to the journal article. Since this example does not include a direct quotation or the use of specific information from the article, there is no need for a page number.

**Secondary sources:**

Sometimes you will find it necessary to cite a work which you know of only because it has been cited by a different author. As a general rule, you should try to consult original sources yourself

rather than rely on secondary sources. However, when you have no choice you should indicate in the text that your source is a citation in another reference and then put the **secondary source** in the reference list at the end of your document.

H. Nakamura, a Japanese scholar, suggests in his book on *The Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* that “In comparison with Westerners who make classifications of various phenomena according to their importance, Indians describe them exhaustively but without order” (as cited by Reed & Reed, 1968, p.116).

The reference list for a paper containing the above content would include a complete citation for the book by Reed and Reed from which the material was taken, but **no** reference to the work by Nakamura.

### **Personal communications:**

Power can make a person very attractive to someone with less power. A relationship in such circumstances provides fertile grounds for misuse of that relationship. (Lewinski, M., personal communication, February 28, 1998).

Information, quotations, and opinions from sources that cannot be accessed by others should be referenced in the document as a personal communication. Either in the text or in parentheses indicate the source of the communication (last name and initial) and the date. Be as precise as you can about the date.

### **How do I List References at the End of the Document?**

Full references to **all** the works cited in the body of the paper must be included at the end in a separate section titled "References Cited" or "References." This is **not** a bibliography in the strict sense of the term since a bibliography would include references not explicitly cited in the text as well. Works cited in the text **must** be fully listed here so that the reader can refer to these sources, if he or she chooses.

Citations should include **last name, year of publication, title**, and where appropriate information about editions, translators, or series. In addition the citation must include the **location and name of the publisher**. Each component in the citation is followed by a period and a single space. For journal articles and other resources, additional information is required. Examples of common sources and their correct formats are provided below.

References which require more than one line are indented beginning with the second line; this is known as a "hanging indent" (in Microsoft Word, see instructions under “indent, hanging” on help screens ). **Single space** within each reference and **double space** between references. **Note carefully** the spacing and punctuation. References must use exactly the same punctuation as shown in the examples.

**Book, single author:**

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Only the first letters of the author's first and middle names are given. Only the first word in the title of the book and the first word after the colon are capitalized, **not all the words**. The title of the book is italicized or underlined.

**Book, multiple authors:**

Webb, W. H., Beals, A. R., & White, C. M. (1986). *Sources of information in the social sciences: A guide to the literature* (3rd ed.). Chicago: American Library Association.

The authors' names are separated by commas and the ampersand (&).

**Chapter or article within an edited book:**

Soltis, J. F. (1990). The ethics of qualitative research. In E. W. Eisner & A. Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education: The continuing debate* (pp. 247-257). New York: Teachers College Press.

Note that the reference to the edited collection begins a new sentence, that the names of the authors of the edited collection are not inverted, that there is a comma after (Eds.), and that the page numbers of the work cited are included in the title element of the reference.

**Book, no author or editor:**

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2001). Washington, DC: Author.

When there is no author, the title is used in place of the author and the citation is alphabetized in the reference list by the first words in the title. When the author and publisher are identical, the word **author** is used as the name of the publisher as in the example above.

**Journal article, single author:**

Cook, B. J. (2001). Islam and Egyptian higher education: Student attitudes. *Comparative Education Review*, 45(3), 379-411.

For the title of the article, only the first word (and the first word after the colon) is capitalized. The title of the journal is italicized or underlined, as is the volume number (in this case, 45). The issue number is included in parentheses but is **not** italicized (in this case 3). Unlike book titles, all major words of journal titles are capitalized. List the inclusive page numbers of the article but **do not** write "pp."

### **Journal article, multiple authors:**

Franklin, B., & Townsend, L. (1995). Relational ethics in writing a woman's life. *Journal of Thought*, 30(1), 71-83.

### **How do I Cite Electronic Sources?**

The rapid growth in the amount and type of information that can now be accessed through the World Wide Web presents a significant challenge to authors seeking to provide appropriate references to such material. The principles that apply to all references should be used in constructing references for electronic material. The basic principle is to provide the clearest and most accurate information that will allow interested readers to find the material.

### **Citing Electronic References in the Text**

In general you should follow the same guidelines as for other kinds of material by placing in parentheses the basic information that will allow the reader to easily find the full reference in the reference list at the end of the document. In the case of quotations or references to specific information, do your best to provide a page, a paragraph number, or a section heading to facilitate locating the material cited. Do **not** include the web address or words like “online” in the text. There is no need to indicate what kind of a source is used in the text since this information will be clear when the reader finds the full citation in the reference list. The following are brief examples.

### **A document from a web site:**

There is growing interest today in what some authors call “emotionally intelligent development policies” (Affolter, 2002, para. 1).

This is a reference to a document found on an institutional web site. Although the paragraphs are not numbered in the document, by counting you can assign a sequence number to the paragraph containing the quotation.

### **An electronic journal article:**

Brazil is experimenting with a new approach to training teachers in the use of computers and the web in their classrooms. The approach is called “Rapid Experiential Learning (REL)” (Rusten & Seguri, 2002, para. 7).

In most electronic sources, there are no page numbers. Try to indicate as best you can where in the document the material can be found. With shorter documents, you may do this by counting the paragraphs and listing that paragraph number. With long documents, you may have to indicate a major section and indicate a paragraph within that section. If the document is available in PDF format, refer to that version because it is more likely to be paginated.

**A web site:**

Ivan Illich is a prolific writer and thinker whose works provide a critical and even anarchic perspective on institutions in our society (“A Profile,” January, 2000).

Since there is no author for this site, the page title has been used instead in the reference list. The citation in the text (above) uses the first few words of the title in quotation marks to allow the reader to find the full citation in the reference list.

**Citing Electronic References at the End of the Document**

The text references in the above examples should lead the reader to the complete citation in the reference list. Citations for the above examples of electronic sources are as follows:

A Profile of Ivan Illich. (January, 2000). Retrieved September 6, 2002 from  
<http://philosophy.la.psu.edu/illich/profile.html>

Affolter, F. (2002). Development Policies for Socio-Emotional Well-Being. Retrieved October 5, 2002 from [http://www.umass.edu/cie/Themes/socio\\_emotional\\_well\\_being.htm](http://www.umass.edu/cie/Themes/socio_emotional_well_being.htm)

Rusten, E. & Seguri, V. (October-December, 2002). Brazil: Rapid Experiential Learning Program: An Integrated Approach to Teacher Preparation. *TechKnowLogia* 4(4). Retrieved October 5, 2002 from  
[http://www.techknowlogia.org/TKL\\_active\\_pages2/CurrentArticles/main.asp?IssueNumber=18&FileType=HTML&ArticleID=443](http://www.techknowlogia.org/TKL_active_pages2/CurrentArticles/main.asp?IssueNumber=18&FileType=HTML&ArticleID=443)

The most important part of the citation is a complete, accurate and current URL. Errors in the URL are the most frequent source of problems with electronic references (*Publications Manual*, 2001, p. 269). Because URLs are complex and intolerant of errors, we strongly recommend that you “cut and paste” the URLs into your reference list.

Conventions for referencing electronic material, even within one system such as the APA, are still evolving. The APA web site provides a section with guidelines for citing electronic sources both in the text and in the reference list at the end of the document (“APA Style,” October, 2002). Electronic citations generally contain the following elements in this order: Author, Date of publication or posting, Title, Retrieval Date, Location Information (URL). Some of this information may be found by using the drop-down menus to locate “page information.” (In *Netscape* click on View and choose Page Info. In *Explorer* click on File and then choose Properties.)

Author –The author of a document on a web site should be clear. Finding the author for text on a web site may be quite difficult—the web master is unlikely to be the author. If no author can be found, then use the title of the page.

Date – If the site contains a date (usually shown as last date modified or date posted), then enclose that in parentheses (year, month, day). If there is no date, then use (n.d.). If there is no author, this element comes after the title of the page.

Title – The next element is the title of the document or article. If the reference is to a web page then use page title as the title. To locate the page title, look at the very top of the screen, above all the icons. The title is also usually found in the “page information” or “properties” box. See above.

Retrieval Date – This information is important since so many sites lack dates of posting or revision, and sites often change or disappear. Give exact date of retrieval, as far as possible, as follows: Retrieved October 5, 2002.

Location Information – The last element is the location, usually in the form of a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address. The URL can be found in the white box at the top of your browser. To avoid errors try to cut and paste the URL into your reference list. Do not break the URL across lines if possible. If it does break, do not insert a hyphen or allow your word processor to insert one.

As always, when in doubt, include whatever additional information that will help the reader find the original source. Note that postings to mailing lists, email messages, or other material that are not accessible to a reader cannot be cited this way. All such unavailable material should be treated as personal communications (See section above on page 6.)

### **Afterword**

Although the details of the APA system may seem overwhelming, remember that most of the time you will be using the same few formats over and over again. Very quickly, you can commit those formats to memory, especially those that are inserted into the text. For the infrequently used sources like interviews, newspaper articles or dissertations, you will have to consult the APA manual for details. If you practice using the format correctly, even initial drafts of a paper, you will find that it gets easier as your graduate career progresses. By the time you get to your Masters thesis or Doctoral dissertation, you will have long since ceased to worry about how to use references.

The system and the rules embodied in APA are essentially an arbitrary (and sometimes changing) set of guidelines to bring order out of the chaos of different journals and disciplines in the social sciences all using somewhat different systems. There is no easy, logical explanation for why a particular format and punctuation is required. Memorize the rules by general category—books, journals, electronic references, etc.—and use your energy for the substantive content of your work.

## References

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