Minimum Competency for Term Papers

Research papers, term papers, and senior projects require the use of sources: books, e-books, periodicals, electronic databases, and web pages. All of these must be cited according to the appropriate citation system (style like MLA or APA) through appropriate documentation. **In all documentation systems, since the 1980s, in-text or parenthetical citation replaces footnotes and endnotes.** These in-text citations refer to a bibliography at the end of the paper which may be called References (APA) or Works Cited (MLA). The documentation is INCOMPLETE unless the writer includes this page; however, the documentation is also incomplete when the student omits the in-text citations. **Documentation must be a two-step process.**

Referenced material

Three types of material are used in written papers and projects. The table below explains each. The form of the citation differs depending upon the documentation system, but these general rules apply to what must be included.

Summary

A summary does not use the exact words of a text. It is brief and states the general idea of several sentences, paragraphs, or possibly an entire article.

Place the author’s last name **OR** the first significant word of the title **AND** the page number **UNLESS** the citation is a web site or an HTML document from an electronic database like EBSCOHOST or ProQuest after the summary (no page number when HTML). The period comes after the closed parenthesis.

Quotation

A quotation uses the EXACT WORDS from a document. If the quote is 4 lines or less (preferable), then the quotation is marked with quotation marks at the beginning and end. Indent longer quotes ½ inch throughout. Omitted words are noted with an ellipsis (…) and added words or letters are placed between brackets [ ].

Place the author’s last name **OR** the first significant word of the title **AND** the page number **UNLESS** the citation is a web site or an HTML document from an electronic database like EBSCOHOST or ProQuest after the quotation (no page number when HTML). The period comes after the closed parenthesis.

Paraphrase

To paraphrase a passage from an article, the writer should “put it in his/her own words.” This means that you must (1) use synonyms and (2) change the word order. Paraphrasing is a two-step process. The paraphrase may be longer than the original.

Place the author’s last name **OR** the first significant word of the title **AND** the page number **UNLESS** the citation is a web site or an HTML document from an electronic database like EBSCOHOST or ProQuest after the paraphrase (no page number when HTML). The period comes after the closed parenthesis.

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