Documentation in Term Papers: Footnote Citations and Bibliographies

Documentation is an essential part of any written term work students submit for credit at a university. It means the citation of the sources used in your essays and reports (including oral reports). Documentation shows your reader the sources of the words, ideas and data that you have used. Students are expected to learn and know the rules of documentation—even when they are not given explicit instruction in their courses. This Skills Module explains why we document our sources, when to do it and how to do it, following the Chicago Style. (Note: all documentation in this module is formatted in Chicago Notes-Bibliography Style,.)

A. Reasons for Documentation

Turabian's *Manual for Writers*, a popular guide for students and researchers, mentions four good reasons to document one's sources.[1]

1. Fair and Honest: It is fair to your sources and honest to your readers to give credit to the authors of the words and ideas you have borrowed for your essay. Fairness and honesty are taken seriously in the academic and professional world. Failure to properly and accurately cite one's sources can result in plagiarism, a serious academic offence with unpleasant penalties.[2]

2. Gives Credibility: According to Turabian, documentation tells "readers the source of the facts so that they can judge their reliability, even check them if they wish. Readers do not trust a source they do not know and cannot find. If they do not trust your sources, they will not trust your argument."[3] In student writing, this type of documentation shows your instructor all the research work you have done.

3. Documentation shows how your ideas relate to the ideas of other writers. Besides showing when you have borrowed the facts or data that other writers have found, documentation also makes it clear how your ideas and opinions fit in with those of other writers. Perhaps your essay examines the differing interpretations of an event by two or more historians, or perhaps it agrees with some of a scholar's conclusions but argues against others. Documentation makes it clear that you understand and can engage with the scholarly conversation on your research topic.

4. Documentation helps your readers find sources useful for their own projects. When you research books and articles, their citations and bibliography lead you to resources that you can use for your own project. Likewise, your readers will find your citations useful. For example, your term paper and its research might lead your instructor to a new source for their research or teaching projects.

---

[1] Kate L. Turabian *et al.*, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers.* 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). 133-134.
[2] Plagiarism and how to avoid it is discussed in detail in a later module, but you can view AU's plagiarism policy at http://www.athabascau.ca/calendar/page11.html#acad_misconduct..
[3] Turabian, 134.

B. When to Cite

According to Turabian, we MUST cite our sources in three situations:[4]
1. when directly quoting the words of your source;
2. when paraphrasing the ideas of the source by expressing them in your own words; and
3. when using ideas, facts, or methods borrowed from your source

The third point often confuses students: must one cite the sources of facts that seem to be common knowledge? Benjamin's *Student's Guide to History* offers helpful advice. If a fact or argument is important to the argument of your paper, it needs to be supported with a citation. Likewise if a fact or argument is controversial, it should also be cited. Facts, however, that are considered general knowledge need not be cited.[5] When you are unfamiliar with a subject, you may not be confident about what is "general knowledge": its best to check your "facts" (or assumptions) and cite your source. For example, the early part of your research essay might contain a paragraph or two giving the general background to your topic that you have summarized from general history books or specialized encyclopedia. A citation would show your reader the source of the general information.

In addition, you MAY cite sources that you did not quote or paraphrase, but which you found useful in your research and which may interest your reader.[6] As you read scholarly writing, you will notice that some writers use footnotes to add comments and asides that are not necessary to the argument of the essay. These "discursive footnotes" should not distract a reader—they're best reserved for explaining an aspect of the evidence or anticipating a minor question. Students should check with their instructor before including them in their essays.

C. How to Cite Using the Chicago Style.
Styles: When documenting sources, scholars and students must follow a standardized style for formatting the information. Instructors will usually specify which style is appropriate for their discipline. Most styles are similar enough that readers can easily identify the author, title, publisher and year of a source. There are, however, enough differences in details that researchers usually consult a style guide that shows exactly how to format documentation.

In the Chicago notes-bibliography system, citations are placed in footnotes at the bottom of the page, or endnotes at the end of the essay, chapter or book, and a full bibliography of works cited at the end of the essay or book. Footnotes are the easiest to read, especially when reading an electronic version. Some disciplines use other in-text citation systems,

---

[4] Ibid.
[5] Jules R. Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*. 10th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's: 2007), 131.
[6] For example, a student who chooses to compare three different scholarly opinions about Julius Caesar might indicate that two other scholarly opinions that could not be included.

such as MLA, e.g. (Cels 41) or APA, e.g. (Cels, 2010, p.41) that places the source author's name, page number, and sometimes the year in parenthesis at the end of a sentence. Footnotes or endnotes are much better than a parenthetical system for some disciplines, like history, because historical research often involves complicated written sources, such as unpublished books, stone inscriptions, scrolls, books with unknown authors, laws, account, and personal papers.

Chicago Style: The notes-bibliography system most commonly used by historians is the Chicago Style for the Humanities. The *Chicago Manual of Style* is a massive reference book: researchers often use shorter guides.[7] For example, Benjamin's *Guide* summarizes the Chicago Style and contains a model essay that illustrates the system (in chapter 5). There are also various software systems available that help researchers to automatically format (and re-format) citations. For example AU students can use "Reference Works." However, students should still be able to manually type a citation and be able to read a citation.

Citation Models: At the end of this module there will be exercises in which you must look up books and journal articles and create citations and bibliography entries. Record your answers so you can check them against the models given in the Chicago Quick Guide at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. First, one determines which kind of source is being used in the citation or bibliography entry: is it a journal article? a book? a book section? an edited book? etc. Benjamin provides a "Directory to Footnote/Endnote Documentation Models" on page 132, and another for Bibliographies on page 146 (the section of the book with grey tabs). Follow the model appropriate for the source. Missing any item or incorrectly formatting it may confuse a reader.

Information for Documentation:
        Journal Articles: E-journals will usually provide a complete citation that you can copy or download—however, you will probably have to format it properly. Print journals often provide citations on the bottom of the first page; otherwise, check the title page the volume, issue and year.
        Books: It's best to take information from the book itself—library catalogs can contain errors. The publication information can be found on the title page of a book and the copyright page. Record the city where the publisher is based. If more than one place is given, take the first city. The copyright page will list the dates of earlier editions and sometimes reprints—this can be confusing. Each time a book is published (in a revised edition, 2nd edition, or later editions), there may be updates and changes, even just in the pagination, so a citation or bibliography has to be clear about which version of the book you mean. If there is a list of copyright (©) dates on the copyright page, the last usually refers to the book you are using. Reprints are exact copies and have the same page numbers—do not use re-print dates.

---

[7] University of Chicago Press. *Chicago Manual of Style.* 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. AU Library http://0-www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.aupac.lib.athabascau.ca/home.html (accessed Oct 12, 2009). This website also provides a link to the "quick guide."

Take the example of R.I. Moore's *The Formation of a Persecuting Society,* the second edition of a book with a subtitle published in 2007 by Blackwell in the city of Malden, Massachusetts, USA. A bibliographic entry would look like this:

Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250.* 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007.

Organizing Footnotes: According to Benjamin's *Guide*, the note number should be placed at the end of a sentence, after all punctuation (including quotation marks), as is done in this sentence.[8] Creating footnotes (or endnotes) is made very easy with a word processor as well as software that automatically formats citations. For example, in MS Word, you can use the Insert menu and select Reference to include a footnote. The superscript number is automatically inserted in the text of one's essay and an endnote or footnote is created where one can type the citation. Although there are various automatic features, writers still have control over various options, such as choosing between endnotes and footnotes and the format of the numerals. Use Arabic numerals (1,2,3…). Use the "Help" menu of your software if you are unsure how to insert or format footnotes.

Format of Citations: Students sometimes get confused about where to place the note numbers in their essay. As Benjamin mentions,[9] the first reference to a source should provide the full, complete information as shown in the models. In second references[10], use a shortened version, usually just the author's name. If the essay uses more than one source by the same author, then short references should include the title in order to avoid confusion. When a note cites the same source as the previous note, then some scholars still use the word "Ibid.", an abbreviation for the Latin word *ibidem*, meaning "in the same place." The notes for this module show examples. You may use "ibid." or the author's name in a short form citation—but be consistent.

Organizing Bibliography: In the Chicago Style, entries for bibliographies follow a different format than entries for citations, so students must consult a style guide, such as Benjamin's guide. It explains both how to format the bibliography page and how each entry should be formatted. Some citation software will automatically create bibliography entries when a citation is inserted in a footnote. Bibliographies are single spaced with a line between each entry. After the first line, entries are indented: you can use your word processors' Format/Paragraph command to apply a "hanging indentation" of half an inch to all the entries in a bibliography.

Tips on Organizing Citations
1. Unfinished documentation means an unfinished paper and may be considered plagiarism.
2. Note the bibliographic information of sources while taking notes.
3. Cite while you write—it's much harder to remember where citations belong after writing your essay.

---

[8] Benjamin, 133.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Benjamin, 134.

4. Abide by the style guide required for the assignment, course or discipline.
5. Get help, if you are unsure, from AU's Write Site or from your tutor.

D. Documentation Exercises
The following exercises run through some of the more common types of sources that you may encounter while completing the assignments in this course. Look up the essay or book using the AU library data bases and find the bibliographic information. Then use the templates for footnotes and bibliography entries in Benjamin's *Guide* to correctly document these sources. After a few examples, you'll notice the general pattern and be able to read footnotes you encounter

1. Which bibliography style is most commonly used in History?

2. Write out the correct citation for a footnote citing page 64 of *The World of Late Antiquity*, a book by Peter Brown.

3 . If page 93 of Brown's book was cited again after a few notes, how would it appear in a footnote?

4. How would one format the information for including Brown's book in a bibliography?

5. According to Benjamin's guide, how would one cite p. 41 in the essay "Gregory of Tours and the Franks" in the edited online book, *After Rome's Fall,* in a footnote?

6. According to Benjamin's guide, how would one format a bibliography entry for the essay "Gregory of Tours and the Franks" in the online book, *After Rome's Fall*?

7. What is the correct footnote citation for page 203 in Elizabeth A. Spiller's article in the Spring 2000 issue of *Renaissance Quarterly*?

8. Look at the title page and copyright page (illustrations 3 and 4) for Peter Brown's *The Rise of Western Christendom* and create a bibliographic entry for it.

9. Considering the format and contents of this bibliographic entry, what kind of source is it?
Polecritti, Cynthia L. *Preaching Peace in Renaissance Italy: Bernardino of Siena and His Audience.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000.

10. Considering the format and contents of this bibliographic entry, what kind of source is it?
Sutherland, Jon N. "The Idea of Revenge in Lombard Society in the Eighth and Tenth Centuries: The Cases of Paul the Deacon and Liuprand of Cremona." *Speculum* 50 (1975): 391-410.

11. Considering the format and contents of this bibliographic entry, what kind of source is it?

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Sentiment of Honour in Kabyle Society." Trans. Philip Sherrard. In *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society,* edited by J.G Peristiany. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

12. To correctly organize and format a bibliography all of the following are needed EXCEPT
    A. entries must be listed alphabetically by author's last name
    B. entries must be single spaced
    C. entries must be numbered
    D. entries must be formatted using "hanging indent"
    E. an extra space should be left between entries
Feedback C. There is no use in numbering bibliographic entries. For long bibliographies, some instructors prefer subheadings for primary sources, books and articles, but usually it is best to simply list sources alphabetically.

13. Where should the note number be placed in the following sentences?
    Ganshof argued that Charlemagne's medieval empire was very weak.
    Innes disagrees, pointing out that Charlemagne was able to make his will known across his vast domain.
    The Magna Carta guaranteed that no freeman would suffer punishment "except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land."

14. How are the titles of journal articles and essays formatted in the Chicago Style?

15. How are the titles of journals and books formatted in the Chicago Style?