



# Student Writing Guide

## Writing Style and Referencing MLA Citation Style

All fields of research agree on the need to document scholarly borrowings, but documentation conventions vary because of the different needs of scholarly disciplines. MLA style for documentation is widely used in the humanities, especially in writing on language and literature. Generally simpler and more economical than other styles, MLA style features brief in-text citations in the text keyed to an alphabetical list of works cited that appears at the end of the work. In the Religions and Cultures department at Nipissing, the standard style and reference guide that students should use while writing their essays is MLA. Here is a condensed version of the guide for quick referencing. Please see more complete guides at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>, or <http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/mlagd.php>. You may also want to get yourself a copy of *A Canadian Writer's Reference* by Diana Hacker.

### Referencing:

#### *What kinds of sources do I document?*

- direct quotations from a book, article, film, letter, etc.
- references to a book or article
- ideas you draw from a source but present entirely in your own words
- paraphrases and summaries of books, journal articles, pamphlets
- governments publications, video recordings, web sites, emails
- single words, short phrases, sentences and longer passages quoted from books or articles used
- statistics

### Citing sources in the text:

Your reference should appear within the text of paper immediately after a quotation or reference to a work. It should indicate the author and page of the work to which you are referring. Your reader will be able to find the full citation in your Works Cited.

In-text referencing can be cited in the following ways:

#### *Author's name in text:*

Townsend believed that Medieval Europe was a place of active markets in grain and of traveling merchants (10).

***Author's name in reference:***

Medieval Europe was a place of "traveling merchants and active markets in grain" (Townsend 10).

***Authors' names in text:***

Others like Jakobson and Waugh (210-15), hold the opposite point of view.

**Preparing the Works Cited Page:**

This appears at the end of a research paper and lists all sources consulted to write the paper including books, articles, personal interviews, etc. It is arranged alphabetically by the author's surname or by title if no author exists. The second and subsequent lines of each entry are indented five spaces. Double space the entire list, both *between* and *within* entries

**SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR WORKS CITED AND IN-TEXT REFERENCES****Book**

Author's Last name, First name. Book Title. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date.

**One Author*****Works Cited Page:***

Johnson, Charles Richard. Middle Passage. New York: Atheneum, 1990.

***In text Reference:*** (*i.e. the reference inserted after the sentence in the body of your paper*)  
(Johnson 176)

**Two or Three Authors*****Works Cited Page:***

Leakey, Mary D, and Louis S. B. Leakey. Some String Figures from North East Angola.  
Lisboa: Museu do Dundo, 1949.

***In text Reference:***

(Leakey and Leakey 92)

**Corporate Author**

A book by a corporate author is any book whose title page lists as the author a group, rather than individuals. Start with the name of the corporate author, even if it is also the publisher.

Corporate Author. Book Title. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date.

***Works Cited Page:***

Battelle Institute. Land Use: West Central Ohio, Dayton Power and Light Company.  
Columbus: Battelle Institute, 1960.

***In text Reference:***

(Battelle 78)

**Anthology**

Editor's Last name, First name. Title of the Work. City of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication.

***Works Cited Page:***

McNally, John, ed. Humor Me: An Anthology of Humor by Writers of Color. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 2002.

***In text Reference:***

(McNally xv)

**Work in an Anthology**

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of the Chapter or Selection." Book Title. Editors First name, Last, preceded by the abbreviation Ed (for "Edited by") City of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Pages of the chapter or selection.

***Works Cited Page:***

James, Henry. "The Friends of the Friends." The Norton Book of Ghost Stories. Ed. Brad Leithauser. New York: Norton, 1994. 40-60.

***In text Reference:***

(James 47)

**Journal Article**

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of the Article." Journal Title Volume number (Year of Publication): Consecutive Pages of the Article.

**One Author*****Works Cited Page:***

Myerson, Joel. "A Calendar of Transcendental Club Meetings." American Literature 44 (1972): 197-207.

***In text Reference:***

(Myerson 199)

### Two Authors

**Works Cited Page:**

Brown, Cecelia M., and Lina Ortega. "Information-seeking Behavior of Physical Science Librarians: Research and Practice." College & Research Libraries 66 (2005): 231-47.

**In text Reference:**

(Brown and Ortega 237)

### Magazine Article

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of the Article." Magazine Title. Day Month(abbreviated except for May, June and July). Year of the article: inclusive page numbers.

**Works Cited Page:**

Cook, Mariana. "Cousin Kay." Victoria. Nov. 2001: 27-28.

**In text Reference:**

(Cook 28)

### Newspaper Article

Provide the name of the newspaper, but do not use the article (*The, An, A*) that precedes it (*Globe and Mail*, not *The Globe and Mail*).

Author's Last name, First name. "Article title" Newspaper's title day, month, and year, edition of the newspaper: page number preceded by the section number or letter if each section is separately paginated.

**Works Cited Page:**

Johnston, David Cay. "Got Game? Got Old Game?" New York Times 11 July. 2003, late edition: F1+.

**In text Reference:**

(Johnston F1)

### Encyclopedia Article

"Title of the Article." Title of the Encyclopedia. Edition. Year of Publication.

**Works Cited Page:**

"Magna Carta." The New Encyclopedia Britannica. 15th ed. 1998.

**In text Reference:**

("Magna Carta" 521)

### Review

Start with the name of the reviewer and the title of the review. Then insert *Rev of* (for "Review of", but do not underline it or enclose it in quotation marks. Next, provide the title of the piece reviewed, followed by a comma, by the word *by*, and the name of the author of the piece being reviewed. End the entry with the name of the newspaper, magazine, or journal and the standard publication information.

Reviewer's Last name, First name. Rev. of Title of Piece being reviewed, by author of piece being reviewed. Name of the Newspaper/magazine/journal Day Month. Year: page number(s).

***Works Cited Page:***

Barth, Melissa E. Rev. of The Summons, by John Grisham. Magill Book Reviews 1 Nov. 2002: 221.

***In text Reference:***

(Barth 221)

### Electronic Journal Article

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of the Journal Article." Name of the Journal. Volume number. Issue number (Month year of publication of the article): pages of the article. Date the journal article was accessed. <URL for the article>.

***Works Cited Page:***

Scott, Jonathan. "Advanced, Repressed, and Popular: Langston Hughes During the Cold War." College Literature 33.2 (Spring 2006): 30-51. 27 August 2007. <<http://web.ebscohost.com/>>.

***In text Reference:***

(Scott 32)

### Item from a Library Database

Author's Last name, First name. "Article Title." Journal Title. Volume number. Issue number (Month year of publication): pages of the article. Name of the Database. Database. Sponsoring Institution, City, State. Access date <url of database>.

***Works Cited Page:***

Clark, Zsuzsanna. "From Saturday-Night Poetry to Big Brother." New Statesman 132 (July 2003): 32-45. Academic Search Complete. EBSCOHost. The Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus. OH. 27 Aug. 2007 <<http://search.ebscohost.com/>>.

***In text Reference:***

(Clark 35)

### **Thesis or Dissertation (digital)**

Author's Last name, First name. Title of the Article. Type of publication (Thesis or Diss).  
Institution at which the Dissertation or Thesis was completed, city, year: page numbers.  
Name of the Database. Database. Sponsoring Institution of the Database, City, State.  
Access date <url of database>.

#### ***Works Cited Page:***

Ryals, Douglas Wesley. Renaissance Speculation Shakespeare and the Prehistory of Liberalism. Diss. University of California, Irvine, 2006: v-781. Proquest Digital Dissertations. Proquest. The Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus, OH. 27 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.proquest.com>>.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(Ryals 251)

### **Electronic Book**

Author's Last name, First name. Book Title. Name of any editor, compiler or translator.  
City of Publication. Publication information from the printed work if the work has been printed. Electronic publication information, such as title of the Internet site, the site editor, version number, date of the electronic publication, the name of the sponsoring organization. The access date and <the electronic address>.

Author's Last name, First name. Book Title. Date of printed work. Access Date <url>.

#### ***Works Cited Page:***

Hartog, Hendrick. Man and Wife in America: A History. 2002. 27 August 2007  
<<http://quod.lib.uumich.edu>>.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(Hartog 2002)

### **Web Site**

Author of the website. Title of the Website. Date website was published/updated.  
Sponsoring Institution. Access date <url of the website>.

#### ***Works Cited Page:***

Campbell, Donna. The Edith Wharton Society. 5 Aug. 2003. Gonzaga University. 27 Aug. 2007 <<http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/wharton/indexa.html>>.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(Campbell)

### **Film of Video Recording**

List films by their title, and include the name of the director, the film studio or distributor and its release year. If other information, like names of performers, is relevant to how the film is referred to in your paper, include that as well.

Film's Title. Director. Names of performers, writers, and producers. Distributor. year of release.

#### ***Works Cited Page: Movies in Theaters***

The Usual Suspects. Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benecio del Toro. Polygram, 1995.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(The Usual Suspects)

If you refer to the film in terms of the role or contribution of a director, writer, or performer, begin the entry with that person's name, last name first, followed by role.

#### ***Works Cited Page:***

Lucas, George, dir. Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope. 1977. Twentieth Century Fox, 1997.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(Lucas)

#### ***Works Cited Page: Recorded Movies***

Include format names; "Videocassette" for VHS or Betamax, DVD for Digital Video Disc. Also list original release year after director, performers, etc.

Film's Title. Director. Names of performers, writers, and producers. Original release year. Format type. Distributor. Year of format release.

Ed Wood. Dir. Tim Burton. Perf. Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patricia Arquette. 1994. DVD. Touchstone, 2004.

#### ***In text Reference:***

(Ed Wood)

### **Television Program**

"Title of the Episode." Name of the Narrator. Title of the Program. Title of the Series. the Network, local city. The date of broadcast.

**Works Cited Page:**

"Popularity of Fur on Rise Again." Narr. Virginia Cha. Sunday Today. NBC. WNBC, New York. 9 Feb. 2003.

**In text Reference:**

("Popularity of Fur")

**Sound Recording (CD)**

Artist's Last name, First name. Title of the recording. The medium, if other than a compact disk. Name of the Orchestra. Name of the Conductor. Record label, year of issue.

**Works Cited Page:**

Copland, Aaron. Long Time Ago: American Songs. Saint Paul Chamber Orch. Cond. Hugh Wolff. Teldec, 1994.

**In text Reference:**

(Copland)

**Difference between in text Reference and Works Cited Page**

What does in text citation look like in a paper?

When you finish your paper, your in-text citations should look like the ones in this sample paper.

In-text quotation;  
author cited in the  
text and just a  
page number after  
the quote. The  
period is after the  
parentheses.

Paraphrase with  
parenthetical  
documentation

The Russian philosopher and literary theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin, makes a clear distinction between satire and the carnivalesque. He states, "The satirist whose laughter is negative places himself above the object of his mockery..." (12). The carnivalesque does not criticize from a lofty position of detachment, it mocks, but it mocks all of society, including itself. Its main goal is to make all in the community equal, and it uses laughter to do so. The carnivalesque levels things out in a playful way (Bakhtin 21).

Andrew Buckland's play *The Ugly Noo-Noo* uses the carnivalesque to indirectly criticize apartheid and the effects of apartheid on South African society. Buckland starts out the play as a

<p>Summary with parenthetical documentation; just cite the page number because the author is cited in the text</p>	<p>man mowing his lawn <u>who</u> suddenly gets sucked under the earth and finds himself in a new world. This underground world is a splendid world ruled by creatures associated with the ground. Many of the characters in the world above the ground are cockroaches, such as the <u>Parktown Prawn</u> that terrorizes the inhabitants of the wealthier suburbs of Johannesburg because it cannot be destroyed (2-12). In</p>
<p>quotation-electronic source-no page number</p>	<p>this play "grotesque realism forces one to examine elements of the world that are often overlooked, and these elements reveal the true nature of things" (Olson)</p>

### What does a Works Cited Page look like?

<p>Begin at the left margin.</p>	<p>Works Cited</p>
<p>Indent five spaces</p>	<p>"Anton <u>Pavlovich Chekhov</u>." <i>Contemporary Authors Online</i>. Detroit: Gale, 2000. <i>Literature Resource</i></p>
<p>Double space between and within entries</p>	<p>Center. Gale. <u>UMUC's</u> Information and Library Services. 5 Aug. 2003 &lt;<a href="http://www.umuc.edu/library/database">http://www.umuc.edu/library/database</a>&gt;.</p>
<p>Capitalize all words except articles and prepositions in book, journal, and newspaper titles.</p>	<p><u>Chekhov</u>, Anton <u>Pavlovich</u>. <i>The Cherry Orchard</i>. 1903. New York: Dover, 1991.</p>
<p>Second consecutive work by the same author</p>	<p>---. "A Nervous Breakdown." 1888. <i>The Schoolmistress and Other Stories</i>. Trans.</p>
<p>Public access Web site with no print equivalent</p>	<p>Constance Garnett. <i>Project Gutenberg</i>. 1999.</p>

<p>Two authors: Give complete names for both; first author: Last name, First name; second author: First name, Last name →</p>	<p>5 Aug. 2003 &lt;<a href="http://www.worldwideschool.org/library/books/lit/drama/TheSchoolmistressandOtherStories/chap2.html">http://www.worldwideschool.org/library/books/lit/drama/TheSchoolmistressandOtherStories/chap2.html</a>&gt;.</p>
<p>Electronic source with print equivalent. Cite the first part as a print source and then add the electronic database information.</p>	<p>Raw, Laurence and Denise Whalen. "The Cherry Orchard." <i>Theatre Journal</i> Oct. 2000: 409. <i>Academic Search Premier</i>. EBSCOHOST. <a href="http://www.umuc.edu/library/database/">UMUC's Information and Library Services</a>. 5 Aug. 2003&lt;<a href="http://www.umuc.edu/library/database/">http://www.umuc.edu/library/database/</a>&gt;.</p>

### **The Ten Commandments of Writing an Essay**

One of the most important expectations of a student in a Humanities course is the writing of a research essay. For this reason, it will be essential that you can perform this task well. There is no foolproof system for writing a good essay, but an overview of some important steps to take when writing an essay can help get you on the right track.

1. Start with a topic. Choose a topic early in the course and well before the paper is due. You will write a better essay if you choose a topic you are interested in but make sure that the topic is relevant to the course and fits the parameters of the assignment.
2. Narrow your topic down to a question or theme. Most topics are far too broad to be covered adequately in a short paper. Then focus this question or theme on a specific example. Questions need to be anchored in concrete examples, texts, or thinkers. You might want to restrict the historical period or geographical area you deal with or discuss the topic only as it appears in one or two texts or authors.
3. Do preliminary research. Begin to do some reading on the topic. Read to give yourself background information and to make sure you understand the topic and its importance. As you read, ask yourself what you think might be the answer to the question you are asking.
4. Formulate the answer to your question as a thesis statement. A thesis statement is the answer to the question you are asking. It is the conclusion of your argument.

This might be the most important step in the entire process. A clear thesis statement will give focus and clarity to your paper and allow you to organize it coherently.

5. Form an argument to support your thesis. Ask yourself why you think your answer to the question is the right one. Make a list of the reasons you think this. Make a note of facts or texts or ideas that support it. Don't ignore counter-arguments because they undermine your thesis. Instead, respond to them and demonstrate why your thesis is still true despite them. Ask yourself whether your arguments really demonstrate your thesis adequately. If not, you can either revise your thesis or try to find new and better arguments.
6. Do further research. Now that you know the points you want to make you can do more focused research to fill out your argument and to fill in any gaps you may have in your argument.
7. Write an introduction. Your introduction should give background information on your topic and will usually end with a clear statement of your thesis. Avoid vague, general or melodramatic opening statements like "From the dawn of time humans have..." or "All people at all times have..." Provide enough information that the reader can understand your topic but don't get into the argument of the paper.
8. Write the body of the paper. Organize your paper point by point and paragraph by paragraph. Link each point to the previous one. Stick to each point you make and draw clear links between the point you are making and the thesis you are arguing. Demonstrate explicitly how each point supports your thesis.
9. Write your conclusion. Use your conclusion to restate your thesis and to describe how you've demonstrated it. Don't introduce new evidence or arguments here. You may perhaps suggest the consequences of your thesis or reasons why it is important.
10. Proofreading is incredibly important. Ideally, leave your paper for 24 hours and return to it. Don't rely on spell check or grammar check to proofread for you.

Of course, following these steps can't guarantee that you will write a good essay or get a good mark. But they are a good place to begin if you aren't sure how to write an essay or if you want to improve your essay writing.

### **Very Common Word Errors**

Below is a list of words students consistently confuse. Keep this list handy when you are proofreading. It will be very helpful in catching these very common problems. It is also worth you reading it through a couple of times before you start writing just to familiarize yourself with them. For our purposes, when you see the term 'non-standard' in the list below, it means.....it's NOT a word, don't use it!

### **A note about Dictionaries**

Students are tempted to refer to dictionary definitions in essays. This is typically not necessary and whatever definitions are relevant are likely to be best drawn from your course materials, readings and or lecture notes. At this level of learning, it is likely that the definitions you are working with are complex and highly specific to the discipline you are in. Typically this specificity and complexity are not captured well by a standard dictionary. However, if you must refer to a general dictionary use only the OED (Oxford English Dictionary), which is available electronically through the Nipissing University e-resources.

### **accept / except**

*Accept* is a verb meaning “receive.” *Except* is usually a preposition or conjunction meaning “but for” or “other than”; when used as a verb it means “to leave out.”

### **affect / effect**

*Affect* is a verb meaning “act upon or influence.” *Effect* is most commonly used as a noun meaning “result” or “impact”; *effect* can also be used as a verb meaning “to bring about.”

### **alot**

*Alot* is not a standard English word, and even *a lot* is rather unbecoming in formal prose. Don’t use *A lot* and try to think of a different word if you are tempted to use *a lot* in reference to amount or frequency. The sound-alike word *allot* is a verb meaning “to assign or distribute a portion of something.”

### **alright / all right**

Perhaps because we tend to pronounce *all right* as though it were one word, the *alright* spelling has appeared. While the familiar words *altogether* and *already* were once two words, the spelling of *alright* for *all right* is still considered unacceptable by most dictionaries, though the single- word spelling is widely used. You should not use *alright* in formal, academic writing.

### **amount / number**

Use *amount* with a singular noun that names a quantity that you cannot count (confidence, food, work, gold). Use *number* with a plural noun that names a quantity that you can count (cars, shoes, accountants, children).

### **between / among**

Use *between* when referring to two things (“between a rock and a hard place”) and *among* when referring to more than two persons or things (“among the members of her class”).

### **beside / besides**

*Beside* is a preposition meaning “next to.” *Besides* is a preposition meaning “except” or “in addition to,” as well as an adverb meaning “in addition.”

**complement / compliment**

*Complement* with an *e* refers to things that fit together and is related to the word *complete*; *compliment* with an *i* is something I give to someone who is deserving praise.

**continual / continuous**

*Continual* means that something recurs constantly: “His dinner was continually interrupted by phone calls from telemarketers.” *Continuous* means that something never stops: “The continuous re-booting of her computer was a sure sign of a virus.”

**\*\*\*\*could of / would of / should of (this is a very very common mistake!!)**

We might say these phrases when speaking, or it may sound as if we say these, we shouldn't. They are incorrect and the more correct form is *could have*, *would have*, and *should have*.

**\*\*\*\*different from / different than (and this is another very common mistake!!)**

*Different from* is the correct usage. Things differ *from* each other. However, in a comparison of many differing items, one item might be *more different than* the others, but in this case “than” is connected to the word “more” (as in “more than”) not the word “different.”

**discrete / discreet**

A *discreet* person is tactful, shows good judgement, or is able to keep a secret: “Before accepting the proposal, the millionaire made discreet inquiries into her fiancé's personal history.” *Discrete* refers to something that is separate and distinct: “The resulting report was divided into three discrete sections: former marriages, bankruptcies, and criminal activity.”

**disinterested / uninterested**

*Disinterested* means “impartial” or “having no bias.” *Uninterested* means “bored.”

**eminent / imminent**

An *eminent* person is someone of distinction. An *imminent* disaster is likely to occur at any moment.

**etc.**

Some usage commentators state that *etc.* should not be used in formal writing, that it is the sign of a lazy writer. Other usage commentators suggest that *etc.* be used only when a list could include several other items that are reasonably obvious, and that it should never be used in reference to people. If and when you use *etc.* – an abbreviation of the Latin phrase *et cetera*, meaning “and so forth” – it should always be accompanied by a period, regardless of where the word appears in the sentence.

**everyday / every day**

*Everyday* is an adjective meaning “ordinary.” *Every day* is a two-word phrase (the adjective *every* modifies the noun *day*) meaning “daily” or “each-day.”

**fewer / less**

*Fewer* refers to a quantity that you can count (cars, shoes, accountants, children). *Less* refers to a quantity that you cannot count (confidence, food, work, gold).

**hopefully**

Consider the meaning of the following sentence: “Hopefully, Bidwell ran for city council.” It could be that the writer means to imply that Bidwell was such a fine upstanding individual with evident leadership qualities that the writer hopes she ran for city council. Or, perhaps the sentence makes a statement about Bidwell, who, with a hope for a purposeful and adventurous future, ran for city council. The problem with *hopefully* is that in form it is an adverb meaning “in a hopeful manner.” Yet since the early 1930s the word has been used to mean something like “let’s hope,” or “it is hoped that,” as in the sentence, *Hopefully, the soccer game won’t be rained out tonight*. In conversation and in informal writing, *hopefully* is frequently used in this way. To avoid ambiguous statements such as the first sample sentence, in formal writing you should restrict the use of *hopefully* to contexts in which it means “in a hopeful manner,” and use “I hope” or “It is hoped that” to express the more general “let’s hope.”

**imply / infer**

A speaker or writer *implies*, “hints at,” or “suggests” an intended meaning; the listener or reader *infers* from what is said or written, and “comes to a reasoned conclusion or deduction.”

**in / into**

*In* generally refers to a location within: “She sat in the car all day.” *Into* refers to the action of going toward the location: “The cyclist ran into the car.”

**into (for “interested in”)**

If you are into using *into* to mean “interested in,” get out of it. This is a 60s colloquialism that does not belong in formal writing, and which should be dropped from casual speech as well. No dictionary or language expert is *into* this usage.

**\*\*\*irregardless / regardless (a very common mistake!!)**

*Regardless* means “without regard to” (the suffix – *less* conveys negation.) *Irregardless* is a non-standard word that by its appearance would mean, illogically, “without regard” (the prefix *ir* – conveys negation as well). **The most widely used illiteracy in English, *irregardless* is likely a blend of *irrespective* and *regardless*. Do not use it.**

**is when / is where**

Neither of these phrases is considered grammatical in English. Do not write something like “Absolute zero *is when* all the atoms in a molecule stop moving.” Rather, re-write the sentence by inserting a noun after *is*, or, if appropriate, by replacing *is* with *occurs* (“Absolute zero occurs when ...”). Better still, change the sentence altogether: “Absolute zero is the theoretical temperature at which all the atoms in a molecule stop moving.”

**its / it's**

Like *yours* or *hers*, *its* is a possessive pronoun that indicates possession without an 's. It is often confused with *it's*, a contraction for "it is" or "it has." The apostrophe indicates the missing letter(s) and that is the ONLY time the word *its* has an apostrophe!! There is no such word form as *its'*. Moreover, it is best not to begin sentences with *its* or *this*.

**militate / mitigate**

To *militate* against something means "to work or operate (usually) against it." To *mitigate* a circumstance means "to reduce its severity, make it less serious."

**phenomena / phenomenon**

*Phenomena* is the plural form of singular *phenomenon*. It is incorrect to use *phenomenas* or *phenomenons*. The clipped form *phenom* is sportswriter's slang.

**principle / principal**

As an adjective, *principal* means "first or most important." The most important person to a grade-schooler is the school *principal* (noun), who wants to be considered a *pal*. The homophone *principle* is a noun meaning "a rule of conduct or law." Principals are usually people of principle, we hope.

**quote / quotation**

*Quote* is a verb; *quotation* is a noun. In formal writing you should not use *quote* to mean *quotation*.

**reason is because / reason why**

In both of these commonly used phrases, one word is redundant. The word *because* means "for the reason that." So, when you use *the reason is because* you are saying, "the reason is for the reason that," most certainly an unnecessary repetition. The same goes for the equally popular *the reason why*, where *why* in context means "for that reason." Do not write, "The *reason* I did not submit my essay on time is *because* I had to take my housemate to the Emergency Room." Rather, make the sentence tidier and avoid the redundancy: "I did not submit my essay on time *because* I had to take my housemate to the Emergency Room."

**systemic / systematic**

Something that is *systemic*, like racism or discrimination, operates within a system and is hard to detect. A *systematic* approach to a task is carried out in a thorough, orderly way.

**unique (really, very, somewhat)**

*Unique* is an absolute term meaning "one of a kind." Therefore it cannot sensibly be modified with words like *rather*, *really*, *very*, *somewhat*, *quite*, *most*, or *more*. How can a thingamajig be *very* one of a kind or the *most* one of a kind? If the thingamajig is one of a kind, it is unique. If, however, there are other thingamajigs like it – though few to be found – use words such as *rare*, *uncommon*, or *unusual* to describe it.

**\*\*\*than / then (Watch this one. It's very common and the spell check/grammar check won't always catch it, but we will!)**

*Than* is used when making a comparison: *She is wiser than me*; *then* refers to time, indicating when or in what order an action or event occurred. Because these words sound alike, *than* is frequently misspelled as *then*.

### **who / whom**

*Who* is a pronoun that is used as the subject of a sentence or clause. *Whom* is the object form of the pronoun. A *who* can be sensibly replaced with *he* or *she*, a *whom* with *him* or *her*.

### **Who/That/Which**

People, and all things to do with them should be referred to as *who*; things should be referred to as *that* or *which*.

\*\*\*For example, one does not say “Frida Kahlo was an artist **that** gained in reputation over time.” One does say: “Frida Kahlo was an artist **who** gained in reputation over time.”

### **Woman/Women**

Woman and women are NOT interchangeable. The word *woman* is a singular noun, the word *women* is plural.

## **Symbols for Common Errors**

*Often faculty use abbreviated notes to indicate grammatical problems. Here is a list of the symbols used for common errors.*

**agr**: agreement of subject and verb in terms of tense

**amb**: ambiguity, the meaning of the sentence is not clear

**awk**: awkwardness, choice of words and sentence structure lack fluency

**cap**: capitalization

**cs**: comma splice, improper use of or lack of comma

**dang**: dangling participle, such as ending a sentence with “of” or “by”

Eg. It was a problem that everyone was aware of.

**D**: diction, clumsy or inappropriate choice of words

**frag**: sentence fragment, fragments are incomplete sentences

Eg. I need to find a new roommate. Because the one I have now isn't working out too well.

**gr**: grammar

**it**: italics

**¶**: new paragraph necessary

**P:** punctuation

**quot:** quotation marks

**ref:** pronoun reference, antecedent of pronoun is unclear

**rep:** repetition

**RO:** run-on sentence. A run-on sentence is one which has two or more independent clauses (that is, complete sentences) are joined without punctuation or conjunction. A recommended rule of thumb would be a maximum of 3 independent clauses contained in one sentence.

**sl:** slang: casual and non-academic language

**source:** citation for information being presented

**sp:** spelling

**sp inf:** split infinitive, an infinitive that has an adverb between the “to” and the verb.  
Eg. *To boldly go where no one has gone before.*

**ss:** sentence structure

**T:** verb tense

**trans:** transition between sentence, ideas or paragraphs is awkward or abrupt.

~ : transpose (change the order of the words)

**wdy:** wordy

**ww:** wrong word

### **The Nipissing University Policy on Academic Dishonesty**

Source: [http://www.nipissingu.ca/calendar/studentpolicies\\_academicdishonesty.asp](http://www.nipissingu.ca/calendar/studentpolicies_academicdishonesty.asp)

**\*\*This policy is enforced by the Department of Religions and Cultures. It is EVERY students' responsibility to understand this policy.**

#### **Introduction**

The University takes a most serious view of such offences against academic honesty as plagiarism, cheating, and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced.

### **Plagiarism**

Essentially, plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

1. the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work.
2. parts of the work (e.g. phrases, ideas through paraphrase or sentences) are taken from another source without reference to the original author.
3. the whole work (e.g. an essay) is copied from another source and/or
4. a student submits or presents a work in one course which has also been submitted or presented in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge or prior agreement of the instructors involved.
5. plagiarism should be noted and reported to the Dean.
6. students should be informed of the University's definition and policy on plagiarism at the beginning of each course.

### **Cheating**

Cheating at tests or examinations includes, but is not limited to, dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, or memoranda not authorized by the examiner, or leaving answer papers exposed to view.

### **Penalties**

A student guilty of academic dishonesty may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, of which those listed below shall be exemplary:

1. assignment of a grade of zero in the assignment, test, or exam;
2. assignment of a grade of zero in the course in which the offence is committed;
3. suspension from attendance in all courses in which the student is registered at the time the offence was committed, and loss of credit for any course or courses which have not been completed or in which no grade or final evaluation has been registered at the time the offence was committed;
4. suspension from the Faculty;
5. expulsion from the Faculty;
6. suspension from the University;
7. expulsion from the University.

Withdrawal from a course will not preclude proceedings in respect of academic offences committed in the course, and the right to withdraw may be refused where an academic offence is alleged.

### **Instructor's Action**

The initial responsibility for punitive action lies with the Instructor. The Instructor may assign a grade of zero for that particular assignment, test or exam, or may assign a grade of

zero in the course. The Instructor will advise the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Registrar of the action taken.

### **Suspension or Expulsion by Dean**

The Dean of the Faculty may exercise his or her authority to suspend or expel the student from the Faculty. The suspension or expulsion will be confirmed in writing to the student by registered mail and the Department Chair and the Registrar will be notified.

### **Suspension or Expulsion by President**

If, upon suspending or expelling a student from a Faculty, the Dean determines that the severe sanction of suspension or expulsion from the University is warranted, such a recommendation may be made to the President who may act to expel or suspend the student from the University.

### **Appeals**

1. A student who is assigned a grade of zero in an assignment, test, or examination may appeal the grade to the Senate Appeals Committee.
2. A student who is suspended or expelled from the University may appeal that decision to the Senate Committee on Student Academic Standing Appeals and Petitions Committee.
3. The final appeal in all cases shall be the appropriate Senate Committee.

### **Transcript Notation**

1. The symbols AD (Academic Dishonesty) will be entered on the student's Academic Transcript.
2. The notation "suspended (or expelled) from the Faculty (or University) for academic dishonesty" will be entered on the student's Academic Transcript and Grade Report upon receipt of such a notice by the Registrar from the Dean.
3. The symbols RW (Required to Withdraw) will be entered in the grade column on the student's Academic Transcript or Grade Report in the courses in which he or she was registered for that session except for the courses in which a "0" was given as a penalty or which have already been completed and a grade assigned.
4. The record of a student will be cleared of the notation "suspended (or expelled) for academic dishonesty" upon re-admission to and successful completion of a degree program. The zero grades given because of cheating will remain but the symbol AD will be changed to F. The symbol RW will remain as such.

### **Re-admission**

1. A student who has been placed under suspension from a Faculty is conditionally eligible to reapply for admission or registration in the same Faculty at either the end of a specified time or thereafter.

2. A student under suspension from a Faculty may not apply or be considered for re-admission to the University in another Faculty until at least after the next regular Fall/Winter Session has passed.
3. A student who is expelled from a Faculty is dismissed permanently from the Faculty with no right to reapply for admission.
4. A student who is expelled from the University is dismissed permanently from the University with no right to reapply for admission.

**Note:** Suspension does not imply automatic re-admission. An interview and subsequent positive recommendation from the Dean must satisfy eligibility for re-admission.