Citing Sources: Recommended Resources for International Students

Many international students feel challenged when adapting their writing to meet US standards especially when using citations and source material. The Intercultural Communication Center has compiled a list of helpful Carnegie Mellon resources that students can utilize to increase their awareness of the importance of citations and the ways to use citations effectively and accurately to meet the standards set forth in Carnegie Mellon’s Academic Integrity Policy:
http://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html

CMU Academic Integrity Page:
Provides a clear description for Carnegie Mellon’s standards of academic conduct.
http://www.cmu.edu/academic-integrity/index.html

Video discussion of academic expectations and challenges graduate students experience when trying to meet these expectations.
http://www.cmu.edu/academic-integrity/headernav/videos.html

Questions Commonly Asked by International Students

I’m new to Carnegie Mellon, and I’m not sure about how to format citations in my assignments. Where can I find information about this?

There are many different styles and formats for citations in assignments. Find out which style your professor wants you to use or which style is standard for your field (such as APA, IEEE, Chicago Manual of Style, ACS, CBE or MLA). Carnegie Mellon University Libraries has style guides for students, and the Internet is a useful resource when trying to find information about various style and format guides.

I want to include citations but my professor has said that my sources are not good. Where can I find better sources to use to support my assignments?

Scholarly sources can be found in databases, journals, the library system, or through Google scholar. The Carnegie Mellon University Libraries website also has information about reference librarians who are there to help guide students in different disciplines when searching for sources. Generally, it’s important, especially when using sources found online, to determine if they are appropriate by trying to verify that it was peer reviewed before publication. When looking at Wikipedia, consider it an encyclopedia, which is typically not a scholarly source. However, using the references at the bottom of each Wikipedia article might be a way to find more scholarly information about that particular topic.

Sometimes, I don’t remember where I read something that I put in my paper and sometimes I just use my own opinion or experience, but I’m told that I need a citation. Why?

Within the US, ideas are considered to be the intellectual property of the person who came up with them and, as such, require attribution. If you cannot remember where you read something, but it is important enough to include in your paper, you should find the original source or a source that
corroborates that idea. Furthermore, if you are including your own opinion or experience as part of an argument within your writing, your opinion should be supported by expert opinion, facts, or statistics from published sources to lend credence to your claim.

Support

**Intercultural Communication Center (ICC)**
Provides language and cross-cultural training for NNES including more than 37 workshops and seminars. Specifically, the *Paraphrasing Properly & Avoiding Plagiarism* seminar helps students avoid unintentional plagiarism by focusing on awareness of US academic standards and providing information and practice to improve paraphrasing techniques.

[http://www.cmu.edu/icc/languagetraining/workshops.shtml](http://www.cmu.edu/icc/languagetraining/workshops.shtml)

Short instructional video to help nonnative English speakers understand how plagiarism is defined in the US.


**Global Communication Center (GCC)**
Provides a variety of communication resources for all Carnegie Mellon students, US and international, including individual appointments to help with the writing process.

[http://www.cmu.edu/gcc](http://www.cmu.edu/gcc)

**Information Resources**

**Carnegie Mellon University Libraries**
Information and tools to effectively cite sources in your work.

[http://guides.library.cmu.edu/CitationTools](http://guides.library.cmu.edu/CitationTools)

**Reference Citing Guides and Resources**
Information to help students determine which format or style guide they should follow for writing papers and citing sources. Includes useful links to academically acceptable sources, citation management tools, and citation machines.

[http://guides.library.cmu.edu/content.php?pid=132668&sid=1141677](http://guides.library.cmu.edu/content.php?pid=132668&sid=1141677)

Includes guides about acceptable academic texts and sources to be used as references. Includes links to individual reference librarians.

[http://guides.library.cmu.edu](http://guides.library.cmu.edu)

**Office of Research Integrity and Compliance**
Information about research standards and policies on research misconduct (including plagiarism):

[http://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/research-misconduct/index.html](http://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/research-misconduct/index.html)

Resources to avoid plagiarism and other challenges when writing:

[https://ori.hhs.gov/images/ddblock/plagiarism.pdf](https://ori.hhs.gov/images/ddblock/plagiarism.pdf)