

Carnegie Mellon University

Institute for Politics and Strategy

Master of Science in International Relations and Politics

Thesis Guidelines

Master of Science in International Relations and Politics (MS IRP) students are expected to develop a thesis proposal including a working title, abstract, and research methodology plan prior to Thanksgiving break in the fall semester of the final year (see Addendum I for a detailed proposal guideline). The Thesis Proposal Tutorial course (84-710) will familiarize students with the structure of a thesis, the functions of its different sections, and its connection to the broader scholarly literature. Students must also confirm a thesis adviser by Thanksgiving break of the fall semester of their final year of graduate study. The thesis adviser may be any faculty member within the Institute for Politics and Strategy.

The MS IRP graduate thesis work will occur during the spring semester of the final year. Students will be registered for 18 units of thesis work and are expected to dedicate a minimum of 18 hours per week to work on the thesis for the duration of the semester. The thesis adviser will provide a letter grade for the thesis work at the conclusion of the program. The student is expected to meet regularly (once per week, on average) with the thesis adviser. It is the student's responsibility to schedule regular meetings with the thesis adviser and develop and maintain a work timeline.

The student should consult with the thesis adviser through a mutually agreed-upon means of communication. The student should arrange periodic meetings with the thesis adviser to assist with problems and assure adequate progress. The thesis adviser should help monitor and guide the student's research progress, but it is ultimately the student's job to adhere to the thesis completion timeline in order to graduate on time. The student and thesis adviser should stay within the timeline created in the proposal as closely as possible. If the student experiences difficulties communicating with the thesis adviser, he/she should inform the IPS graduate program manager as soon as a potential problem is apparent.

The completed thesis will include the following parts:

- I. A Master's Thesis Signature Page (Addendum III)
- II. A formal master's thesis paper of publishable quality between 20 and 40 pages in length.
 - a. Preceded by a Master's Thesis Title Page (Addendum IV)
 - b. The thesis should follow the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) (Addendum VI)
- III. A 2,000 word journal article derived from the master's thesis, to be published in the [CMU Journal of Politics and Strategy](#)* or other publication.
 - a. *A signed CMU Journal of Politics and Strategy Submission and Publication Agreement (Addendum V)

Upon completion of the research and writing of the thesis, the student will defend his/her work through an open forum oral presentation in April. The student will submit the thesis to the thesis adviser for final review and comments. The thesis adviser may request additional work or additions to the thesis after the oral presentation/defense. The student will submit to the graduate program manager an electronic copy of the final thesis and all associated materials, including a Master's Thesis Signature Page (see Addendum II) that includes the signatures of the student and the thesis adviser. The graduate program manager will obtain the Institute for Politics and Strategy director's signature on the thesis cover sheet. His signature will confirm completion of the master's thesis.

Addendum I

Thesis Proposal Guideline

The thesis proposal should include the following information.

- I. **Working Title**
- II. **Thesis Adviser**
- III. **Abstract**

The abstract is a brief but specific statement of the project's objectives, methods, and impact. The abstract should offer readers a glimpse of your intended work. Please address what you hope to accomplish, what methodological approaches you intend to utilize, what resources you intend to use, and why the project is important and relevant to you, to the field of political science, and to the global community.
- IV. **Literature Review**

This is a key section that provides important background for your thesis. You should review and discuss the broader contextual framework.

 - a. What has been done before in the field?
 - b. Where are the gaps in the literature as related to your topic of interest?
 - c. Provide an annotated bibliography that reflects your knowledge of the field of political science as related to your topic, and the significance of your topic to the field of political science.
- V. **Research Question(s) and Hypothesis**

Propose at least one research question and explain why it is both important and incompletely understood by existing research. Develop an argument to explain a causal relationship between variables. Make sure to support your argument with at least four sources. Also, propose at least one working hypothesis that you think should help to answer the research question.

 - a. What is new about what you are proposing?
 - b. How will it advance the field?
 - c. How will you know if your hypothesis is proven or disproven?
- VI. **Research Methodology and Timeline**
 - a. What methodological approaches do you intend to utilize in your thesis? Include information on how you will select your cases or collect data, as well as your intended method of analysis.
 - b. What is your expected timeline for conducting your research?
- VII. **Expected Findings**

What do you expect the product of your research to be?
- VIII. **References**

The proposal should include a bibliography according to the [*Chicago Manual of Style*](#) (Addendum VI).

Note on Human Subjects:

All research involving the use of human research subjects as participants must be reviewed and approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before the research may be initiated. To initiate a review, complete an application and submit it to the IRB for review. Contact the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance for answers to questions regarding the IRB or IRB review process. <https://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/human-subjects-research/>.

Note on Funding:

IPS has funding available for expenses related to thesis research. Please complete the Thesis Funding Application (Addendum II) by the posted deadline to apply for this one-time award.

Addendum II: Thesis Research Funding

Deadline: December 1

General Funding Information

The intent of research funding is to support IPS graduate student research by providing financial assistance to be used toward the costs incurred in research projects.

Eligibility

All graduate student research projects initiated during the semester of application are eligible for funding. At the time of application, the student and research advisor should be sufficiently committed to a project to know the scope of the research and potential costs that may be involved.

Research funding is a one-time award. Applications for funding will not be accepted from any student previously funded under the program.

Application Procedures

The application should be completed by the student in consultation with his/her research advisor and the graduate program manager. The final research project may take a different turn from the initial planning information required on the application and the title certainly may change. However, the application does require enough specific information about the proposed project to show that the initial steps toward a thesis are underway and that there is sufficient planning to know how the funding award will be used.

Nature of Proposed Expenses

These funds are intended to help defray the real costs of supplies and materials needed to conduct research. There is considerable variation in the proposed use of research funding according to the nature of the research project. Travel required for various types of field work, consumable supplies, and/or other materials deemed necessary for successful work on research are valid uses of funding. Funds could also be applied as part of the cost of an instrument that the student would use in data collection. Purchase of instrumentation that will have long-term, multiple uses within the department is encouraged. Additions to university or departmental libraries also are valid expenditures.

Research funding is not to be used for books, duplicating materials, or other items purchased with the intent that they become the personal property of the student. Funds are not to be used to pay the student doing the research for the work involved, or to hire another student to do the work of data collection or other aspects of the research project normally expected in the discipline as part of the research done by the investigator. Research funding is not to be used for printing and binding of the thesis, as that is a student's personal expense.

Funding Amounts

The Institute for Politics and Strategy has established a maximum budget of \$500 per student to support research funding.

Application for Research Funding

- 1) **Student Name:**
- 2) **Student's Andrew email address:**
- 3) **Proposed thesis title:**
- 4) **Research Abstract:** The abstract should specify the topic of the research, provide a brief foundation upon which the research is proposed, explain the research design and methods to be utilized (including data analysis), and suggest time line for progress.

Research Project Budget: Provide a list of research related items/supplies needed along with their estimated cost. (Examples: supplies, instrument costs, specialized library acquisitions, postage, survey printing, student travel during data collection, etc.)

| Description of Items/Supplies Needed | Estimated Cost | |
|--|----------------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | _____ | |
| Estimated Research Project Expenses: \$ | | _____ |

5) Additional Funding Assistance: Will you be receiving any other funding to assist with your research expenses? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please describe the source and indicate the amount of funding.

Source: _____ **Amount (\$):** _____

Has this funding already been awarded? Yes ___ No _____

Carnegie Mellon University

DIETRICH COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in International Relations and Politics

THESIS TITLE

PRESENTED BY

STUDENT NAME PRINTED

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

ACCEPTED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR POLITICS AND STRATEGY

THESIS ADVISER

DATE

DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR POLITICS AND STRATEGY

DATE

Addendum IV: Thesis Title Page Sample

Thesis Title

(in bold)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of

Master of Science

in

International Relations and Politics

Name of Student (include middle initial)

(list previous degrees)

M.S. International Relations and Politics, Carnegie Mellon University

(date of submission)

Addendum V

CMU Journal of Politics and Strategy Submission and Publication Agreement

Thank you for submitting your article to the upcoming issue of Carnegie Mellon University's *Journal of Politics and Strategy (IPS Journal)*. The following information outlines your (the author) necessary responsibilities and commitments, pertaining to the editing, publishing, and reproduction of your work by the *IPS Journal*. This agreement must be signed in order for your work to be published in the *IPS Journal*.

1. Agreement

By signing below, I agree to the following:

- My work is subject to any additions, deletions, or changes made by the *IPS Journal* editing team.
- My work is original (unless otherwise cited) and does not violate any copyright agreement.
- In the event that my work is requested for further publishing, I agree to split the benefits 50/50 with *IPS Journal*.
- My submitted work has not been previously published or submitted for consideration elsewhere.
- The manuscript will not be submitted elsewhere unless and until the editors of *IPS Journal* confirm in writing that they have no intention of publishing the manuscript.
- The manuscript is in no way defamatory and does not infringe on the rights of any third party.
- I authorize *IPS Journal*, and therefore third parties, to publish the manuscript in any of these formats (ex., Internet, CDs, online databases, etc.) as the editors deem appropriate without any remuneration to the author.

If any of the above affirmations are breached, you, the author, agree to indemnify *IPS Journal* and its editors for any loss, damage or any other liabilities that may occur as a result.

2. Copyright Transfer

I, the author, hereby transfer all copyrights in and to the manuscript, which is named below, to the Carnegie Mellon University's *Journal of Politics and Strategy*. This transfer is effective if and when *IPS Journal* accepts your manuscript for publication.

3. Agreement of Author

I agree to the terms outlined in this Agreement.

Signature

Date

Printed name

Title of Manuscript

Addendum VI

BASIC STYLE SHEET

ABBREVIATIONS

Academic degrees: BA, BS, MA, PhD Organizations: EU, AFL-CIO, WTO Countries: US, USSR

Note: In running text, spell out United States as a noun; use US for the adjective form only. For example:

US involvement in China

China's involvement in the United States

NUMBERS

***Chicago Manual of Style's* General Rule: zero through one hundred.**

Spell out whole numbers from one through one hundred and certain round multiples of those numbers.* For example:

The property is held on a ninety-nine-year lease.

According to a recent appraisal, my house is 102 years old.

***Chicago Manual of Style's* Alternative Rule: zero through nine.**

Many publications, including those in scientific or journalistic contexts, follow the simple rule of spelling out only single-digit numbers and using numerals for all others.*

Using the general rule, any whole numbers between zero and one hundred followed by *hundred*, *thousand*, or *hundred thousand* are usually spelled out (except in the sciences).

For example:

A millennium is a period of one thousand years.

Some forty-seven thousand persons attended the fair.

but

The official attendance at this year's fair was 47,122.

Whole numbers used in combination with *million*, *billion*, and so forth usually follow the general rule. For example:

The city had grown from three million in 1960 to fourteen million in 1990.

To express fractional quantities in the millions or more, a mixture of numerals and spelled-out numbers is used. For example:

By the end of the fourteenth century, the population of Britain had probably reached 2.3 million.

According to some scientists, the universe is between 13.5 and 14 billion years old.

Ordinals. The general rule applies to ordinal as well as cardinal numbers. The letters in ordinal numbers should not appear as superscripts (e.g., 122nd not 122nd). For example:

Gwen stole second base in the top half of the first inning.
The restaurant on the forty-fifth floor has a splendid view.
She found herself in 125th position out of 360.

*Consistency and flexibility: Where many numbers occur within a paragraph or a series of paragraphs, maintain consistency in the immediate context. If, according to rule, you must use a numeral for one of the numbers in a given category, use numerals for all in that category. In the same sentence or paragraph, however, items in one category may be given as numerals and items in another spelled out. For example:

A mixture of buildings – one of 103 stories, five or more than 50, and a dozen of only 3 or 4 – has been suggested for the area.

Between 1,950 and 2,000 people attended the concert.

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 464-67.

Dates: March 15, 2015 March 2015
Decades: the 1990s the mid-1990s the late 1960s
Academic years: 2015-16 1999-2000
Abbreviations: A.D. 200 300 B.C. a.m. p.m.
Inclusive numbers: Less than 100: use all digits, such as 3-10, 71-72, 96-117
100 or multiples of 100: use all digits, such as 100-104
110-199, etc.: use two digits unless more are needed to
include all changed parts, such as 321-28, 498-532
Cross-references: see chapter 12 see figure 15
Money: Spell out round amounts under \$100,000:
twenty-five dollars, thirty thousand dollars
Use numerals for amounts \$100,000 and over:
\$900,000, \$1 million, \$2.5 million
Percentages: 73 percent 82.4 percent 20-30 percent
Decimals: Include leading 0 for decimals less than one (0.3 percent)

PLURALS

Where *Webster's* gives two forms of the plural, like *zeros* and *zeroes*, the *Chicago Manual of Style* normally opts for the first form.

Plurals of compound nouns: fathers-in-law; courts-martial, coups d'état

Plurals of proper nouns: Names of persons or other capitalized nouns normally form the plural by adding *s* or *es*. Rare exceptions are generally listed in *Webster's*.

The Jones family, pl. the Joneses

The Bruno family, pl. the Brunos

Plurals of noun coinages:

yeses and nos; thank-yous; maybes; dos and don'ts; ifs and buts; threes and fours

Plurals for letters, abbreviations, and numerals:

Capital letters used as words, numerals used as nouns, and abbreviations usually form the plural by adding *s*. To aid comprehension, lowercase letters form the plural with an apostrophe and an *s*. For example:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| the three Rs | IRAs |
| <i>x</i> 's and <i>y</i> 's | URLs |
| the 1990s | BSs, MAs, PhDs |

POSSESSIVES

The possessive of most singular nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*. The possessive of plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals, like *children*, that do not end in *s*) is formed by adding an apostrophe only. For example:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| the horse's mouth | a bass's stripes |
| puppies' paws | children's literature |

The general rule extends to proper nouns, including names ending in *s*, *x*, or *z*, in both their singular and plural forms, as well as letters and numbers. For example:

Singular:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Kansas's legislature | Marx's theories |
| Jesus's adherents | Berlioz's works |
| Tacitus's <i>Histories</i> | Borges's library |
| Dickens's novels | Malraux's masterpiece |

Plural:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| the Lincolns' marriage | the Williamses' new house |
| the Martinezes' daughter | dinner at the Browns' |

Letters and Numbers:

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| FDR's legacy | 1999's heaviest snowstorm |
|--------------|---------------------------|

Possessives of words and names ending in unpronounced 's':

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Descartes's three dreams | the marquis's mother |
| Francois's efforts | Albert Camus's novels |

Possessives of names like "Euripides":

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Euripides's tragedies | the Ganges's source |
| Xerxes's armies | |

Exceptions to the General Rule

Possessive of nouns plural in form, singular in meaning:

politics' true meaning economics' forerunners
this species' first record

Place or organization names:

the United States' role in international law
Highland Hills' late mayor
the National Academy of Sciences' new policy

Expressions:

for goodness' sake for righteousness' sake
but
for appearance's sake
for Jesus's sake

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 351-55.

HYPHENATION

Consult the dictionary when in doubt about whether a compound term should be hyphenated, spelled as two words, or closed up as a single word.

"Words that might otherwise be misread, such as *re-creation* or *co-op*, should be hyphenated. Hyphens can also eliminate ambiguity. For example, the hyphen in *much-needed clothing* shows that the clothing is greatly needed rather than abundant and needed. Where no ambiguity could result, as in *public welfare administration* or *graduate student housing*, hyphenation is unnecessary."

For example:

a five-year-old child; a group of nine-to-ten year olds;
a half hour; a half-hour meeting; a 150-page book; a fifty-year project;
the third-largest country; the second-to-last competitor;
a highly paid consultant; the highest-ranking officer;
decision making; a decision-making body;
philosopher-king; city-state; city-state governance

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 373.

QUOTATIONS

Placement of Terminal Punctuation Marks for Quotations

At the end of a quotation, the terminal punctuation mark is placed inside the closing quotation mark:

Jones stated that the manufacturing schedule was "entirely unrealistic." Jones screamed, "I quit!"
Jones asked, "Where is everyone?"

A question mark or exclamation point that is added as an editorial comment (i.e., an emphasis supplied by the writer) is placed outside the closing quotation mark.

Jones, of all people, said, "The manufacturing schedule is entirely unrealistic"!
Was it Jones who concluded that "the manufacturing schedule is entirely unrealistic"?

Single and Double Quotation Marks

When a quotation occurs within running text, an opening double quotation mark appears at the beginning of the quotation and a closing double quotation mark appears at the end. If a quotation extends over a paragraph break, an opening double quotation mark appears at the beginning of each paragraph, and a closing double quotation mark appears only at the end of the last paragraph in the quotation.

Single quotation marks are used to indicate a quotation within a quotation.

According to Gilliam, traffic "always expands to fill the capacity of a freeway, creating a 'demand' for more freeways."

The syntax of the sentence as a whole determines the punctuation immediately preceding and following the quotation:

In Emerson's words,

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."
"A foolish consistency," Emerson says, "is the hobgoblin of little minds."
Emerson argues that "a foolish consistence is the hobgoblin of little minds."

In most cases, it is permissible to change the capitalization of the first word in a quotation to suit the syntax of the paper.

Source: "Proper words in proper places, make the true definition of a style."
Quotation from source: Swift defines style as "proper words in proper places."
Or: "The true definition of a style," according to Swift, is "proper words in proper places."

Amy Einsohn, *The Copyeditor's Handbook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 77, 205, 207c.

Block Quotations

When quoting material that is 100 words – or at least eight lines – set off the material as a block quotation. Block quotations are indented and are not enclosed in quotation marks.

Ellipses

An ellipsis (omission of a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage) is indicated by the use of three spaced periods with a space on either side. For example:

When a species ... increases inordinately in numbers

Other punctuation appearing in the original text may precede or follow three ellipsis points. Ellipsis points must always appear together on the same line along with any following punctuation. For example:

It does not build,... nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion.

As to *Endymion*, was it a poem ... and *A Syrian Tale* ...?

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 637-39.

CITATIONS

N Footnote

B Bibliography

Books

N: Paul Davies, *The Fifth Miracle: The Search for the Origin of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 23.

B: Davies, Paul. *The Fifth Miracle: The Search for the Origin of Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Two Authors

N: Milton Friedman and Rose Friedman, *Two Lucky People: Memoirs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

B: Friedman, Milton, and Rose Friedman. *Two Lucky People: Memoirs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Editor and/or Translator in Addition to Author

N: Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin, *The Complete Correspondence, 1928-1940*, ed. Henri Lonitz, trans. Nicholas Walker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

B: Adorno, Theodor W., and Walter Benjamin. *The Complete Correspondence, 1928-1940*. Edited by Henri Lonitz. Translated by Nicholas Walker. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Chapters or Other Titled Parts of a Book

N: Brendan Phibbs, "Herrlisheim: Diary of a Battle," in *The Other Side of Time*.

A Combat Surgeon in World War II (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), 117-63.

B: Phibbs, Brendan. "Herrlisheim: Diary of a Battle." In *The Other Side of Time: A Combat Surgeon in World War II*, 117-63. Boston: Little, Brown, 1987.

Contribution to a Multi-Author Book

N: Anne Carr and Douglas J. Schurman, "Religion and Feminism: A Reformist Christian Analysis," in *Religion, Feminism, and the Family*, ed. Anne Carr and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 14.

B: Ellet, Elizabeth F.L. "By Rail and Stage to Galena." In *Prairie State: Impressions of Illinois, 1673-1967, by Travelers and Other Observers*, edited by Paul M. Angle, 271-79. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Electronic Books

N: Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2008), PDF e-book, chapter 23.

B: Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2008. PDF e-book.

Note that electronic formats do not always carry stable page numbers. In lieu of page numbers, include an indication of the chapter or section.

Books Consulted Online

N: Elliot Antokoletz, *Musical Symbolism in the Operas of Debussy and Bartok* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195365825.001.0001.

B: Antokoletz, Elliot. *Musical Symbolism in the Operas of Debussy and Bartok*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195365825.001.0001.

Journals

N: Christopher S. Mackay, "Lactantius and the Succession to Diocletian," *Classical Philology* 94, no. 2 (1999): 205.

B: McMillen, Sally G. "Antebellum Southern Fathers and the Health Care of Children." *Journal of Southern History* 60, no. 3 (1994): 513-32.

Electronic Journals

N: Bernard Testa and Lamont B. Kier, "Emergence and Dissolution in the Self-Organisation of Complex Systems," *Entropy* 2, no. 1 (2000): 17, <http://www.mdpi.org/entropy/papers/e201000.pdf>.

B: Testa, Bernard, and Lamont B. Kier. "Emergence and Dissolution in the Self-Organisation of Complex Systems." *Entropy* 2, no. 1 (March 2000): 1-25. <http://www.mdpi.org/entropy/papers/e201000.pdf>.

Newspapers

N: Mike Royko, "Next Time, Dan, Take Aim at Arnold," *Chicago Tribune*,

September 23, 1992.

B: Borzi, Pat. "Retirement Discussion Begins Anew for Favre." *New York Times*, January 25, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/sports/football/26vikings.html?emc=etal>.

Online Newspapers, News Services, and Other News Sites

Citations are identical to their print counterparts, with the addition of a URL

N: Alison Mitchell and Frank Bruni, "Scars Still Raw, Bush Clashes with McCain," *New York Times*, March 25, 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/25/politics/25MCCA.html> (accessed January 2, 2002).

B: Stenger, Richard. "Tiny Human-Bone Monitoring Device Sparks Privacy Fears." *CNN.com*, December 20, 1999. <http://www.cnn.com/1999/TECH/ptech/12/20/implant.device/>.

N: Glenn Freund and David Rier, "Javits Sponsors legislation to Discourage Terrorism," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, October 28, 1980, <http://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/columbia?a=d&d=cs19801028-01.2.7&e=-en-20--1--txt-txIN----->.

B: Freund, Glenn, and David Rier. "Javits Sponsors Legislation to Discourage Terrorism." *Columbia Daily Spectator*, October 28, 1980. <http://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/columbia?a=d&d=cs19801028-01.2.7&e=-en-20--1--txt-txIN----->.

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010)

PLAGIARISM

Unfortunately, accidental plagiarism has become increasingly common as more research is done online. Remember that the traditional rules for citing sources apply to material gleaned from the Internet.

The following tutorial on plagiarism was prepared by The Writing Place, a service of the WCAS Writing Program at Northwestern University. <http://www.writing.northwestern.edu/writing-resources/handouts/avoiding-plagiarism/>

What is plagiarism, and why should writers worry about it?

Deliberate plagiarism is cheating. Deliberate plagiarism is copying the work of others and turning it in as your own. Whether you copy from a published essay, an encyclopedia article, or a paper from a fraternity's files, you are plagiarizing. If you do so, you run a terrible risk. You could be punished, suspended, or even expelled.

Otherwise mild-mannered professors tend to turn into vigilantes when confronted with plagiarism. Why borrow trouble?

But there is also another kind of plagiarism: accidental plagiarism. This happens when a writer does not intend to plagiarize but fails to cite his or her sources completely and correctly. Careful note-taking and a clear understanding of the rules for quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing sources can help prevent this.

Any college handbook (such as the *St. Martin's Handbook*, quoted in this document) will offer more guidelines for avoiding plagiarism when you write a paper. See also the excellent CAS page on plagiarism put together by Professor Jean Smith of the Writing Program. It has numerous examples of the right and the wrong ways to attribute source.

Some tips for avoiding accidental plagiarism when you use sources:

- Cite every piece of information that is not (a) the result of your own research, or (b) common knowledge. This includes opinions, arguments, and speculations as well as facts, details, figures, and statistics.
- Use quotation marks every time you use the author's words. (For longer quotes, indenting the whole quotation has the same effect as quotation marks.)
- At the beginning of the first sentence in which you quote, paraphrase, or summarize, make it clear that what comes next is someone else's idea.
- At the end of the last sentence containing quoted, paraphrased, or summarized material, insert a parenthetical citation to show where the material came from:

The *St. Martin's Handbook* defines plagiarism as "the use of someone else's words or ideas as [the writer's] own without crediting the other person" (Lunsford and Connors, 602).

(Notice the use of brackets to mark a change in the wording of the original.)

Applying these tips: Avoiding two common forms of accidental plagiarism

1. Paraphrases without citations

Because a paraphrase is supposed to contain all of the author's information and none of your own commentary, a paraphrase with a citation is an example of plagiarism. *The St. Martin's Handbook* defines an appropriate paraphrase as follows:

A paraphrase accurately states all the relevant information from a passage in your own words and phrasing, without any additional comments or elaborations. [It] always restates all the main points of the passage in the same order and in about the same number of words. (Lunsford and Connors 597)

Lunsford and Connors go on to give two examples of unacceptable paraphrases: one that uses the author's words, and one that uses the author's sentence structures (597).

Lunsford and Connors also state that "even for acceptable paraphrases you must include a citation in your essay identifying the source of the information" (597). This point is crucial: without the information about the source, an appropriate paraphrase becomes plagiarism.

Even if you have avoided using the author's words, sentences structure, or style, an unattributed paraphrase is plagiarism because it presents the same information in the same order.

2. Misplaced citations

If you use a paraphrase or direct quotation, it is important to place the reference at the very end of all the material cited. Any quoted, paraphrased, or summarized material that comes after the reference is plagiarized: it looks like it is supposed to be your idea. This is one reason why accurate note-taking is so important; it is possible to forget which words are yours and which are those of the original writers.

Original source:

Paraphrasing material helps you digest a passage because chances are you can't restate the passage in your own words unless you grasp its full meaning. When you incorporate an accurate paraphrase into your essay, you show your readers that you understand that source. (Lunsford and Connors, 596) Plagiarism (misplaced citation):

Lunsford and Connors say that paraphrasing is useful because "[p]araphrasing material helps you digest a passage, because chances are you can't restate the passage in your own words unless you grasp its full meaning" (596). When you incorporate an accurate paraphrase into your essay, you show your readers your understanding of that source.

The reader would logically assume that the sentence following the citation is your own comment on the quotation when it is actually part of the original quote.

Finally, a point about multiple citations from the same source: cite them all individually. It is not adequate to give one citation at the end of the paragraph for a bunch of individual points abstracted from a source.

Parenthetical citations are intended to make citing your sources easy to do; don't be shy about using them.

Examples of acceptable paraphrases: putting the idea in your own words

Taken from Lunsford and Connors (597-98). Original:

But Frida's outlook was vastly different from that of the Surrealists. Her art was not the product of a disillusioned European culture searching for an escape from the limits of logic by plumbing the subconscious. Instead, her fantasy was a product of her temperament, life, and place; it was a way of coming to terms with reality, not of passing beyond reality into another realm.

Hayden Herrera, *Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo* (258) Paraphrase:

As Herrera explains, Frida's surrealistic vision was unlike that of the European Surrealists. While their art grew out of their disenchantment with society and their desire to explore the subconscious mind as a refuge from rational thinking, Frida's vision was an outgrowth of her own personality and life experiences in Mexico. She used her surrealistic images to understand better her actual life, not to create a dream world (258)

Source: Lunsford, Andrea, and Robert Connors. *St. Martin's Handbook*, 3rd. ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

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