



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

The Big RED Check

Department of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity

The Communication Department constituents hold each other to the highest standards of academic integrity and uphold the University policies of Academic Integrity. In accordance with Communication Department AI Policy, any student in this class suspected of plagiarism or cheating on tests or assignments will have a primary hearing. If found guilty, the student will receive a failing grade on the assignment in question and a reduction in the overall course grade, and the results of the hearing will be reported to the CALS Academic Integrity Board.

The Communication Department's policy is based on university-wide policy and procedures. Visit the University Academic Integrity website for further information.

WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES!

Here's your personal, hand-tailored guide to playing the academic game.

Communication students at Cornell know how to write clearly, how to craft an argument, and how to document the sources of their ideas. They observe all the guidelines for academic integrity. When they rely on written sources, they are diligent about citing the authors.

Why? Thinking, writing, and publishing are the heart and soul of academic work. As a Cornell student, from day one, you get to live in a world of ideas, and they're yours for the taking--as long as you credit them in your own written work and state clearly where they came from.

Documentation — diligently crediting all your sources—keeps the score straight. Using a particular citation format (Comm and other social sciences usually use APA) gives you a means of being CLEAR about your sources.

You can think of this as the rules of the game, a game you must now play well. You can also think of it as a gesture of honor: your ideas got stronger because of someone else's hard work. Why wouldn't you give them a tiny acknowledgement?

Are you ready? Writing clear citations is not some pick-up game, it's serious business. But refs are always there on the sidelines to help to make sure the game is played fairly and well.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO DO.

FIRST: know the difference between a paraphrase and a *phrase salad*. To paraphrase, you put another writer's ideas into your own words. Are they your ideas? No. So you cite the source (author's last name, year). Don't forget the year—theories evolve; new data emerge. The year of publication gives the reader essential information.

A phrase salad? tossed together other authors' words, some from here, some from there; no quotation marks, maybe a citation, When your professor sees what you've done, maybe by running your essay through the plagiarism detection tool Turnitin, or maybe from checking your text because her (or his) professorial sensors detect a problem, you'll be called to account. Penalty box, anyone?

THEN: summarize that idea, and tie it back in. The social sciences use summaries extensively; seldom will you quote directly. A summary is a shorter version of ideas or information from a printed source, in your own words. State your source's idea, clearly, precisely, reworked in your own words; then cite that source, and then link those ideas back into your point. When you cite a summary it will look like this:

People's economic status and social backgrounds can influence their health and the differences between one group's health status and that of another group (Clarke, Niederdeppe, and Lunsford, 2012).

ALSO: Quotations honor the writer; take care with them. You've crafted that perfect sentence from time to time, the one that just captures the idea beautifully. Wouldn't you want someone who put your sentence in their paper to make clear that you crafted it? Same goes for when you've got that perfect quote and want to put it in your paper.

Good news—quotation marks are free, so you can use them, EVERY time you want to use the actual words from your source. Quote it, and put in the citation—nothing says “junior high” faster than a quotation plunked into a paper with no explanation of its source or relevance. Oh, and it's plagiarism, and Ezra does not look kindly on that. Author, year, and page number—like a path, laid out for your reader, right back to the original: “Here you go, if you want it!” Your sentence might look like this:

According to Clarke, et al. (2012), Social Determinants of Health (SDH) “advocates do not simply seek to show that social, political, economic, and environmental factors are important drivers of health; they also strive to communicate that health is substantially more complex than an individuals' willpower or health care coverage alone” (p. 4271).

And the reference will look like this:

Clarke, C. E., Niederdeppe, J., & Lundell, H.C. (2012). Narratives and images used by public communication campaigns addressing social determinants of health and health disparities. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 9(12), 4254-4277.

Hey, did you know there's help online for getting this formatting correct? Try <http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage>. Did you know there's software that can help manage your citations? Try Mendeley, and Zotero. Did you know the Library has workshops on how to use them? <http://mannlib.cornell.edu/workshops-instruction>

YOU'RE UP!

Have we overdone the baseball metaphor? Never mind. Whether you mastered this in high school, or it's the first time you've seen this, you are a scholar now, and these are the rules of the game. And the Communication Department—a scholarly community that thinks and cares about communication, participation, sociality, and expression—would like to lead the campus in this regard. No academic integrity violations, always the highest-quality writing and research, and a commitment to academics in the classroom and out. Ask your professor or advisor if you have questions.