Guide to Writing in Anthropology

The field of anthropology has four major divisions: cultural, physical, linguistic, and archeological. Course work for all four divisions requires a great deal of writing. Introductory level anthropology courses commonly require students to write summaries and reviews of articles. Students who decide to major in anthropology should expect to write take home examinations and at least 6 research papers by the time they graduate.

Since the conventions for academic papers vary slightly in each subfield of anthropology, some instructors provide their students with specific guidelines for format and appropriate documentation style. However, the anthropology faculty has adopted the following guidelines for documentation style and paper format.

General Format Instructions

- Use 1” margins on the sides, top, and bottom of each page.
- Type on only one side of the paper.
- Use white paper only.
- Use 12 point font in an easy-to-read style.
- Double space all text except for block quotes and Reference list citations which may be single spaced.
- For longer papers, use appropriate section headings. Headings will vary from course to course. The following sections are advised:
  
  INTRODUCTION
  CONCLUSION
  BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

- Do not use plastic binders.
- Staple papers in the upper left corner.
- In the upper right corner of every page include your last name, the page number, and the name/number of the question you are answering (if applicable).
- Spell check your entire document.
- Proofread your entire document (spell check doesn’t catch everything, particularly words that are spelled correctly but used incorrectly).
- *Italicize* or *underline* all foreign words.
Paper Heading and Title

Do not make a separate title page. Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the left margin of the first page, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course title and number, the essay question number or title of assignment, and the date on separate, single lines. Double space and center the title. Finally, double space again between the title and the first line of your paper. Do not underline your title or put it in quotation marks. Follow the example below:

Thuy Nguyen
Professor Gamburd
Archeology / Anth 590
Take home midterm, question 2
28 July 1998

Reconstructing Lucy’s World

This would be the first line of the paper if you were reading an actual paper. This is an example; it is only an example. If this had been an actual paper, you would be reading about Leakey’s research.

Documentation Style

Always document the sources you use for facts or information that are not common knowledge. There are two parts to properly documenting sources:

1) in-text citations within the body of your paper that tell readers your sources for information and ideas that are directly quoted and/or paraphrased.

2) the reference page at the end of the paper that gives complete information about the sources you have used.

Always place quotation marks around passages that are directly quoted from a source. To indicate that material is paraphrased, do not use quotation marks; simply give the name and date (page number when appropriate) to indicate where you found the information. Anthropology uses the name-year (Geertz 1960) or name-year-page (Geertz 1960:220) system of documentation.

WARNING: WHEN SUMMARIZING OR PARAPHRASING, BE CAREFUL NOT TO PLAGIARIZE—REFER TO THE ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT’S HANDOUT "ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY," ESPECIALLY "THE USE OF SOURCES" SECTION.
In-Text Citations

Name/Date for Paraphrased Information
According to the most recent statistics, tenure track positions in higher education are on the decline (Smith 1998).

Name/Date/Page for Paraphrased Information
According to the most recent statistics, tenure track positions in higher education are on the decline (Smith 1998:131).

Date/Page for a Quotation
In the following sentence, the author’s name is mentioned in the actual sentence, so it does not need to be included in the citation:

Sherman says that, “Locke’s insistence upon the separation of powers” led to the creation of the Supreme Court (1980:131).

Name/Date/Page for a Quotation
“Locke’s insistence upon the separation of powers” led to the creation of the Supreme Court (Sherman 1998:131).

Use Block Form for Quotations 3 Lines or Longer
As in the previous example, the author’s name is mentioned in the passage and should not be repeated in the citation at the end of the quote. Block quotes may be single or double spaced (check with your instructor for personal preference). In block quotes the period comes before the citation.

According to Sherman:

    The Second Treatise of Government...renders explicit and adapts to the British politics of his [Locke’s] day the trend and aim of writers from Languet and Bodin through Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of the distant ancients, Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law. (1980:98)

The Reference Page

A reference page for anthropology follows the style established in American Ethnologist, American Antiquity, and American Journal of Physical Anthropology. List sources in alphabetical order using the appropriate format for the source. For additional citation examples, consult The Chicago Manual of Style or the AAA Style Guide (available at The P.S.U. Writing Center).

Book with One Author

Last name, First name
    Date of Publication Title of Book. Place of Publication: Name of Press.
Article with One Author

Last Name, First Name
   Date of Publication  Name of Article. Name of Journal  Volume Number:
   Pages.

Article in an Edited Volume

Last Name, First Name
   Date of Publication  Name of Article  In  Name of Book. First Name of
   Editor, Last Name of Editor, ed.  Pp.  Page Numbers. Place of
   Publication: Publisher.

To reference a WWW Site, give as much of the following information as available:

Author’s Name, Date of Visit, Title of the Work, Title of the Complete Work, and
the full http or ftp address.

If any information is missing, skip it and go on to the next available information--for example:

Burka, Lauren P.
   1994 (Dec. 5) A Hypertext History of Multi-User Dimensions. MUD

Cautions about citing WWW Sites (World Wide Web)

Choose WWW Sites carefully. Remember that sites are not peer reviewed for accuracy. When
using the WWW for research, it pays to be cautious and skeptical about the information you find.
When in doubt, go to the library to double check your findings.
References


Where to Get Additional Information

For more information on writing for anthropology and citing sources, The Writing Center has the following resources:

- *The Chicago Manual of Style, 14th ed.*
- The Department of Anthropology’s official handout on plagiarism, documenting sources, and academic integrity
- “Anthropology-Style Citations of Electronic Sources.” *Anthropology at Waterloo* (A guide to citing a variety of electronic sources)
- *American Journal of Physical Anthropology’s Guide for Authors*

This guide produced by the Portland State University Writing Center in consultation with the Portland State University Anthropology Department. Any errors contained herein most likely belong to the Writing Center.