Citation FAQ

What is citation?

Citation is where you show your readers that the information you used in your paper is from another source. When you cite you are giving credit to the original author. Citation also shows your readers how they can locate the sources that you've used in your work, including:

- the author
- where you found particular research or data
- references to other researchers or research
- title of the text or article
- publisher of the work
- dates the source material was published
- website or database
- date of publication
- pages where the source material was found

Why do I need to cite?

You need to cite your sources in order to give credit to the original author. By citing your sources you are avoiding plagiarism or the possibility of being accused of academic dishonesty. However, there are more reasons why you should cite your sources. Plagiarism.org suggests that citing your sources also allows:

- readers to locate more information on your ideas
- shows the extent of your research and the scope of your reading
- displays the integration of another's research into your own work
- provides opportunities to heighten your argument with direct quotes from experts in a particular field
- illustrates your depth of understanding regarding a topic

When do I need to cite?

You must acknowledge your sources when you borrow their words or ideas. Consider citing your sources in the following situations:

- Referencing another author's work
- Paraphrasing
- Using direct quotes in your work
- Using someone else's ideas
- Referencing another person's work or ideas
• Borrowing a figure, image, or table

You can provide in-text citation for the above situations using either MLA or APA citation formats. Always check with your professor regarding which citation format he or she would prefer in your paper.

**When do I NOT need to cite?**

There are, however, some instances when you do NOT have to cite:

• Writing your own personal experiences
• Using your own images, figures or art work
• Using "common knowledge" such as folklore, common sense observations, myths, urban legends, and historical events (but **not** historical documents)
• Writing your own results based on findings from your own research
• Using generally-accepted facts, e.g., overeating is bad for your health