



Seminary Hacks – Academics in the Spotlight

## **CITATIONS: CRUCIAL TO WRITING SUCCESS**

### **OVERVIEW TO CITATION**

All academic and theological writing by definition is a formal dialogue between the writer and reader on an idea or concept expressed within the text, an artistic creation, a code of morality or ethics, or a philosophical stance. By definition, that dialogue will contain elements and evidence from multiple sources to frame the discussion in an organized and logical manner. All of those elements and evidence must be carefully and honestly cited and documented.

## THEOLOGICAL CITATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Writing seminary assignments almost invariably include multiple sources ranging from biblical scripture to commentary by scholars to evidence from academic journals, concordances, book reviews, interviews, and a host of electronic sources accessible on a host of devices. Of utmost importance to both students and professors is the complete and ethical use of all of these materials. All work from all sources should and must be documented fully in order to give the credit to the originator and to satisfy the ethical standards of honest use. Under no circumstances should a writer neglect documentation and citation.

## OVERVIEW

The use of all source material has been codified and shared in documentation standards defined in several formats: MLA; Chicago Style, 16<sup>th</sup> edition; APA, and others. For most purposes here at LTS, students will use the Chicago Manual of Style format which will be referred to as CMS.

Published in full in Kate L. Turabian's book, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*, covers a full range of print, digital, audio, and visual sources together with comprehensive overviews of research writing, academic writing style, and grammar and mechanics. It is an invaluable resource for writers in the humanities of which theology is a subset.

## **PLAGIARISM: WRITING'S HONOR CODE**

According to the eminent writer on theology Lucretia Yaghjian whose book *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*, plagiarism is the unpardonable sin of writers and researchers in any academic discipline. It is the unintentional or intentional act of incorporating the ideas or words of someone else into one's own writing without properly acknowledging them. In essence, it is theft.

## **PLAGIARISM**

The research and writing process in a theological setting starts with a careful reading and reflection on the written and spoken words of others from a range of sources. Research then focuses those words along with the original thoughts of the writer through the lens of the research question (thesis statement/research question). If the words and ideas in any of those outside sources is not acknowledged and documented, the writer has committed plagiarism. Plagiarism at seminary can result in expulsion.

## **LTS STUDENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017 – ACADEMIC HONESTY**

**Academic Honesty:** Lancaster Seminary assumes and expects that students will be honest in examinations and in acknowledging sources used in all assignments. With respect to academic work and other Seminary business, the seminary expects students to represent themselves and their work honestly to their instructors and other seminary representatives.

Breaches of the Seminary's standards for Academic Honesty include, but are not limited to:

- \* cheating on examinations or papers;
- \* plagiarism, including but not limited to:
  - + misrepresenting the nature and extent of one's own research;
  - + employing words and/or ideas originating with others without proper acknowledgment; and/or
  - + submitting the same work for more than one course without clear prior consent of all instructors.

## **INADVERTENT CAUSES OF PLAGIARISM**

The following are common causes for inadvertent (and preventable) plagiarism:

- \* Citing an author's exact words without putting them into quotes
- \* Paraphrasing a source and citing it, but using words so similar to those of the source that they are almost a quotation
- \* Using ideas or methods from a source without citation

## **PARAPHRASE WARNING**

A paraphrase is the representation of an idea or concept of an author in words more clearly or pointedly than the source does. A writer opens the door to suspicion of plagiarism when too many of the source author's words are used in the paraphrase. A useful method is to look away completely from the source when composing the paraphrase and then check the paraphrase by following whether the same ideas are in the same order in the source. If they are, then the paraphrase may border on plagiarism. Focus and condense and rewrite. Make sure the paraphrase is accurate.

## **TURABIAN AND CHICAGO HUMANITIES CITATION**

According to author Kate Tarabian, a writer's first duty is to get the facts and reasoning right. The second duty is to tell readers where the facts come from. To that end, the writer must cite the sources of the facts, ideas, or words used in the paper. This citation must be exact and accurate in order to allow the reader to consult the sources if necessary to ascertain the validity of the use of the ideas and words of the author.

## **REASONS FOR CITING SOURCES**

- \* To give credit
- \* To assure readers about the accuracy of the facts
- \* To show readers the research that informs the work
- \* To help readers follow the points of the research

## **REQUIREMENTS OF TURABIAN CITATION**

- \* Situations requiring Citations:
  - o When you quote exact words from a source
  - o When you paraphrase ideas that are associated with a specific source
  - o When you use any idea, data, or method attributable to any source you consulted

## **REQUIREMENTS OF CITATION**

Information required (for print as well as many sound and video sources):

- Who wrote, edited, or translated the text
- What data identify the text
- Who published the text and when
- Where can the text be found

## **CHICAGO HUMANITIES STYLE @ LANCASTER SEMINARY**

Turabian's manual for students and academic writers uses *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) developed by the University of Chicago Press. CMS (or Chicago) has two formats: author-date and notes-bibliography. Author-date is used predominantly in the social sciences. Notes-bibliography is used in the humanities and is sometimes called Chicago Humanities style. This is the style on which most theology publishers base their style. This is now the preferred writing style of Lancaster Theological Seminary. This style is characterized by the use of footnotes or endnotes to provide short references within written work, with a complete bibliography at the end of the work.

## OWL PURDUE AND CMS SITES

The Online Writing Lab at Purdue University offers a very helpful guide to the Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition. This guide is freely available. The Chicago Manual of Style offers subscription-based access to their online version. A Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide is available as a free resource.

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

## WHAT A FOOTNOTE LOOKS LIKE IN THE TEXT

In bibliography style, the writer signals that she has used a source by placing a superscript number at the end of the sentence in which a quote is used or a reference is made to a source:

According to one scholar, “The railroads had made Chicago the most important meeting place between East and West.”<sup>4</sup>

Word Processors (MS Word, Google Docs, etc.) offer a Footnote tool, usually found in the “Insert” menu, that takes care of the formatting and numbering for you.

## WHAT A FOOTNOTE LOOKS LIKE IN THE FOOTER

After the note number is inserted in the text, a corresponding number appears at the bottom of the page. This is where the citation goes with information about the source (author, title, and facts of publication) plus relevant page numbers.

4. William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1991), 92-93.

Notice the order of the elements, punctuation, capitalization, and italicizing.

## ADDITIONAL FOOTNOTES FROM SAME SOURCE

After a source is cited once, it can be cited again in a shortened form. If this is the only source by that author, the shortened form is the author's last name and the page number:

8. Cronon, 383.

If there is more than one source by the same author, the shortened form is the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number:

8. Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 383.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY

Also list alphabetically (by author's last name) all sources cited and consulted at the end of the paper on a separate page entitled "Bibliography." Each entry is formatted with a hanging indent. Note slightly different format:

Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1991.

Exactness and accuracy is of extreme importance in footnotes and bibliography entries.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ONLINE

There is a wide and ever-growing variety of sources in research and each needs to be cited. For basic and common resources used in seminary courses, Schaff Library offers a helpful guide. Click on "Guides" from the library's homepage, and look for "Chicago Style" under Topics.

Additional examples are available at the OWL Purdue site:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

## MLA STYLE

In certain instances, for example the publication or submission of a poem, short story, play, or literary essay to a journal or literature conference, the Modern Language Association format of documentation and citation may be required. Extensive explanations and examples are available also at OWL Purdue: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>

Those students who started prior to the 2016-2017 academic year and are more comfortable with MLA, are allowed to continue using this style for the remainder of their studies. Students should discuss this with their professors before submitting their assignments.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

In all academic writing, integrity and honesty are of the utmost importance. Avoiding any unethical use of another author's work is crucial to maintaining one's reputation and status as a trusted and respected writer and analyst. Not to do so is likely to be considered an indelible stain on one's professional and personal honor.

**A good rule of thumb is 'When in doubt, cite.'**