Acknowledgments

Information for this brochure was adapted from "Annotated Bibliographies." The Writing Center @ The University of Wisconsin – Madison. www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/
AnnotatedBibliography.html

Where to Find Help on Campus

Consultants at the **Hamline University Writing Center**, located in the basement of Bush Library, are eager to help you with all stages of your writing. We will work with you whether you have just received an assignment and have no idea how to begin or you have a finished draft and want help with revisions.

You can make appointments online at WC Online. Simply follow the instructions at:

http://rich37.com/hamline

We look forward to seeing you!



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Annotated Bibliographies



Annotated bibliographies are useful tools for anyone doing research on any topic. You're probably writing one because a professor has told you to, but once you know how to do it, you may want to write an annotated bibliography for every research paper you write.

First, of course, you have to know what an annotated bibliography is.

What Is an Annotated Bibliography?

As you probably already know, a **bibliography** is a list of sources you have consulted while researching a paper. What you might not know is that writing a bibliography is a process that accompanies your research, not just a product completed at the end.

Every time you read a source, whether you read the whole thing or just part of it, you must write down all the information necessary for anyone to find that source again. This information will become your bibliography, also called your References or Works Cited list. It includes title, subtitle, author, editor, translator, publisher, date of publication or posting, location (if online), and the date you accessed the material.

You can keep this information in a document on your computer, in a notebook, or even on 3x5 cards. Just don't lose it!

An <u>annotation</u> is the "note" you write about each entry in your bibliography. The note may do one or more of several things:

- Summarize: If someone asked what this source is about, what would you say?
 What is its thesis? What are its main points and arguments?
- Assess: After you've summarized this source, you may want to evaluate it. Is it biased? Reliable? Up to date? Useful? Relevant? How does it compare to other

sources in your list? Other writing in the field?

Reflect: After you've summarized and assessed your source, you may want to look at how it fits in the larger picture of your research. Has it changed your thinking on the topic in any way? Has it provided new insights or raised any questions? Will it send you in any new directions? How do you think you might use it in your paper?

The annotations you write for each source are usually for your own use; make them as complete as you will find helpful. However, you may be asked to submit an annotated bibliography as part of your research. In that case, you must be sure to fulfill the requirements of the assignment regarding format and content for your annotations.

Formatting an Annotated Bibliography

Find out the style required for your annotated bibliography: APA, MLA, ASA, or Chicago. If you do not have the corresponding style guide, check the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University (http://owl.english.purdue.edu) for comprehensive summaries of each style. OWL also has examples of actual annotated bibliographies.

Your annotations should be written in paragraph form. Their length will depend on your purpose. If you are writing to summarize, the entries may be fairly short. If you are writing to assess and reflect, your entries may be as long as a page. The entire document should be double-spaced.

The content of your annotations will also depend on how your bibliography is to be used. What does your professor expect? Will your bibliography be published with your research? Will you use it to focus your ideas for your paper?

Four Types of Annotations

Annotated bibliographies tend to fall into one of four categories depending upon their content. Once you have decided how your bibliography will be used, you can decide which category will be best.

- Informative. An informative annotation uses the summary you wrote when you first encountered the source. It states the author's thesis, proofs, and conclusion. It may list chapter titles and main ideas.
- 2. *Indicative*. This type of annotation merely indicates what the source is about without offering any specifics. The entries tend to be short.
- 3. Evaluative. An evaluative annotation uses your reflective analysis to describe the strengths and weaknesses of your source and how it fits into the larger picture, both for you in this particular paper and for the field of study as a whole.
- Combination. As the name suggests, this
 format combines information about your
 source with reflective evaluation. It
 requires more length and may prove more
 valuable in helping you write your final
 paper.

Accessing More Information

- The Writing Center at The University of Wisconsin – Madison: www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook
- The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University: http://owl.english.purdue.edu