**OUWC General MLA In-Text Citation Guide**

In-text citations are used to indicate the source that outside information used in your writing comes from, whether the information is in the form of a direct quote, paraphrase, or summary. In-text citations must be used anytime material is taken from an outside source and used in your writing. Failure to properly and accurately cite material can result in plagiarism sanctions.

There are two ways to incorporate an in-text citation: ***parenthetical citations*** and ***signal phrases*.** Both methods provide the reader with the author’s last name and the page number that indicates where the original material can be found.

***Parenthetical citations*** are used at the end of a sentence, after the quote and before the period:

Example 1 (Journal Article):

1. There is no doubt among scholars that “plagiarism is a very serious problem in the academic world” (Sharma 134).
2. “Plagiarism is a very serious problem in the academic world,” especially at the collegiate level (Sharma 134).

Example 2 (Novel):

1. Polysyndeton is seen throughout the novel. For example, “He turned south along the old war trail and he rode out to the crest of a low rise and dismounted and dropped the reins and walked out and stood like a man come to the end of something” (McCarthy 5).
2. This long type of sentence, such as “He turned south along the old war trail and he rode out to the crest of a low rise and dismounted and dropped the reins and walked out and stood like a man come to the end of something,” is an example of polysyndeton (McCarthy 5).

Example 3 (Newspaper):

1. In a recent article, it was revealed that “a new Campus Master Plan, approved at the June 6 Board of Trustees meeting, details how Oakland University’s campus could look in 2025 under ideal circumstances” (Brockway 6).
2. The fact that “A new Campus Master Plan, approved at the June 6 Board of Trustees meeting, details how Oakland University’s campus could look in 2025 under ideal circumstances,” further demonstrates Oakland’s rapid growth (Brockway 6).

***Signal phrases*** are used at the beginning of a sentence to indicate authorship:

Example 1 (Journal Article):

1. Sharma asserts that “plagiarism is a very serious problem in the academic world” (134).
2. “Plagiarism,” according to Sharma, “is a very serious problem in the academic world” (134).

Example 2 (Novel):

1. McCarthy’s characteristic use of polysyndeton is evident in the beginning of the novel: “He turned south along the old war trail and he rode out to the crest of a low rise and dismounted and dropped the reins and walked out and stood like a man come to the end of something” (5).
2. McCarthy’s use of polysyndeton, such as “He turned south along the old war trail and he rode out to the crest of a low rise and dismounted and dropped the reins and walked out and stood like a man come to the end of something,” is characteristic of his writing. (5).

Example 3 (Newspaper):

1. In *The Oakland Post*, Brockway reports that “a new Campus Master Plan, approved at the June 6 Board of Trustees meeting, details how Oakland University’s campus could look in 2025 under ideal circumstances” (6).
2. Editor-in-Chief, Paige Brockway, writes that “A new Campus Master Plan, approved at the June 6 Board of Trustees meeting, details how Oakland University’s campus could look in 2025 under ideal circumstances," in her recent *Oakland Post* article (Brockway 6).

In order to avoid redundancy in your writing, both parenthetical citations and signal phrases should be used. Regardless of whether parenthetical citations or signal phrases are used, quotations should always be framed byyour own words before and/or after the quotations, like in the examples above. This is also called blending.

**Signal phrase verbs:**

admits

agrees

argues

asserts

believes

claims

comments

compares

confirms

contends

contests

contrasts

denies

discuses

disputes

emphasizes

illustrates

implies

indicates

insists

notes

observes

points out

refutes

rejects

remarks

reports

responds

states

suggests

thinks

writes

**Adding or removing words from a quotation**

When words are removed from a direct quotation, ellipses (…) should be used to indicate that part of the original work has been removed. The removal of words should never change the meaning of the original sentence.

Original quote: “First, the packets provide students with something tangible to carry away with them and to serve as a reference guide for later” (Wolcott 47).

Quote with removed words: We wanted to supply handouts because “…packets provide students with something tangible to carry away with them and to serve as a reference guide for later” (Wolcott 47).

An ellipsis can be used in the middle or end of a quote as well:

Middle: “First, the packets provide students with something tangible… to serve as a reference guide for later” (Wolcott 47).

End: “First, the packets provide students with something tangible to carry away with them…” (Wolcott 47).

Words can be added into a direct quotation, typically for clarification. Words added to a quote should have brackets [ ] surrounding them and, like ellipses, should not alter the author’s original meaning.

Quote with added material: We wanted to supply handouts because “…packets provide [first-year writing] students with something tangible to carry away with them and to serve as a reference guide for later” (Wolcott 47).

Another example: “First, the [citation practice] packets provide students with something tangible to carry away with them and to serve as a reference guide for later” (Wolcott 47).

**Block quotes**

When citing long pieces of text (more than four lines of prose), the formatting is significantly different. The block quote itself in this example is highlighted:

There are all sorts of football players and football fans that eagerly await any given Sunday for a

chance to waste the day away watching their favorite sport. Medley, a die-hard Lions fan,

shares some thoughts on one of his favorite players:

Calvin Johnson, also known as Megatron, is one of the greatest wide receivers to ever play football- undoubtedly the greatest receiver to ever be a part of the Detroit Lions. Before his untimely retirement, he was able to surpass Jerry Rice’s record for most receiving yards in a single season. Johnson was known for being humble and an outstanding member of the Detroit community. (24)

After this part of the interview, Medley broke down in tears, lamenting the idea of a world where Calvin Johnson was on “Dancing With The Stars” rather than playing football for the Detroit Lions.

**Notes about the above block quote:**

1). The entire quote is offset from the rest of the paper

2). The quote does not have quotation marks on each end

3). The page number appears in parentheses *after* the period rather than before

**Citing a source with more (or less) than one author**

In-text citation for a source with two authors:

 Parenthetical: (Stafford and Johnson 81).

Signal: According to Stafford and Johnson, “…” (81).

In-text citation for a source with three authors:

 Parenthetical: (Caldwell, Quinn, and Ford 15).

Signal: Caldwell, Quinn, and Ford emphasize “…” (15).

In-text citation for a source with more than three authors:

 Parenthetical: (Slay et al. 26).

Signal: Slay et al. determined that “…” (26).

Multiple sources in one sentence:

 Parenthetical: (Brady 12; Palmer 3).

An in-text citation for a source with no known author uses the title of the article/document:

 Parenthetical: (“Article Title” #).

Signal: It was found in “Article Title” that “…” (#).

Examples:

Parenthetical: (“Establishing Writing Center Workshops” 46).

Signal: It was found in “Establishing Writing Center Workshops” that “…each workshop should ideally address a specific topic…” (46).

Citing indirect sources (a source in a source) ((source-ception))

Example text (for this fictitious sentence, Redman is the original author, who quotes Bretner in his article):

During the 2014 International Cheese Conference, chief cheese connoisseur Bretner claimed that “provolone was the tastiest cheese.”

To cite Bretner via Redman’s article, the citation is a little different:

Even though Bretner determined that “provolone was the tastiest cheese,” many people disagree (qtd. in Redman 4).

-or-

Even though it was determined that “provolone was the tastiest cheese,” many people disagree (Bretner, qtd. in Redman 4).

Works Cited

Brockway, Paige. “A whole new campus in sight for future.” *The Oakland Post* [Rochester, MI], 20 July 2016, p. 6.

McCarthy, Cormac. *All the Pretty Horses.* Vintage Books, 1992.

Sharma, Bal Krishna. “Plagiarism among University Students: Intentional or Accidental?” *Journal of NELTA,* vol. 12, no. 1 & 2, 2007, pp. 134-141.

Wilcott, Wilma. “Establishing Writing Center Workshops.” *The Writing Center Journal,* vol. 7 no. 2, 1987, pp. 45-49.