

# MeCo Guide to Scholarly Communication

## Introduction

A Copy of this guide is available on the Department web site at [http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/media/?page=essay\\_guide](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/media/?page=essay_guide)

One of our teaching aims in the department is to produce graduates who can communicate in numerous genres and forms. Many of your units in news writing and media production are designed to help you do this. We hope that as part of your development as writers you learn to identify different genres and their conventions, and adjust your writing practice accordingly. Scholarly or academic writing is also a genre that has particular rules. Some of these relate to presentation, formatting and referencing. But there are also conventions around the idea of scholarly communication that are important.

Scholarly communication can occur in a range of forms (spoken and written) and genres, from conference papers to debates or forums, to book reviews and essays. Academic essays have a special place in scholarly communication. They are a compact form for exploring an entire suite of skills: from researching, to formation of an argument, to page formatting and referencing (the latter being crucial to avoid penalties for plagiarism). The term ‘essay’ has links to the idea of ‘assaying’, weighing up. The essay is about examination, trial, testing, proving, measuring, adjusting and ascertaining. Essays are a very useful genre for exploring positions and arguments.

But essay writing is not the only form of scholarly communication and so it can be useful to think about its broader aspects. The principles of communication we are discussing here can apply to verbal discourse (discussion and debate) as well as writing (essay writing as mentioned, but also other kinds of written argument).

Having and conveying an argument is a defining aspect of scholarly communication. But what exactly does this mean when your lecturer says you need to find an argument, or make it stronger? Some key terms and ideas might be useful here.

1. *Focus*. An important term to think about in relation to argument is focus. This means addressing the topic under discussion or essay question at hand, and formulating a response to it. Sometime, this response will comprise a

collection of points that are only loosely organised. This loose collection of points will often be lacking any strong conclusion. A more sophisticated response is to develop an argument and organise your points in a way that strengthens and demonstrates your argument.

2. *Defining your terms.* Every concept and term has in-built characteristics and limitations. One of the key responsibilities of scholarly communication is to define terms that you use. Don't always use a dictionary, as a dictionary tends to give common meanings rather than special or technical ones. Often, the definition promoted by a key figure or theorist in the field is better.
3. *Assertions and Claims.* Every time you make an assertion or claim, you are assuming things about the state of the world. One of the dangers students run into is firstly making unsubstantiated claims, and secondly making claims that are far too general. Unsubstantiated claims lack support and evidence. General claims are by nature generalizing (e.g. 'All people [without exception] think x'). Look at what claims you are making and whether you have explained them correctly and clearly, and whether you have supported them. A secret of scholarly communication is to make claims that are relevant and supportable – but note, restricting your claims to first person 'I' does not always give your claim strong support. 'This is what I think' is not a strong academic argument. 'Based on these arguments, and these circumstances, backed up by these sources, this is what I argue,' is stronger.

Making a claim based on the activities of unnamed figures, or basing a claim on generalisations, is not good practice. Common knowledge provides limited justification for statements, but you should be careful in relying on common knowledge. If you find yourself making unsubstantiated claims, you may need to adjust the claim you are making to make it less grand. This might mean going back to what your readings or textbook has said about a topic, and building a claim more carefully, or grounding it more carefully. If you find yourself making claims which are too general, you may need to qualify your statements, or bolster the claim with evidence (sometimes both are important).

4. *Structure of argument.* An argument sometimes involves multiple parts; one claim followed by another. Special attention should be given to the structure and logic of the argument. This also means thinking about organisation. In your essay or presentation or even in classroom discussion, you will have identified many different points to make. But the issue is, which point should be made where, in which sequence? A point could work well in two places. This is where organisation comes in, as part of creating coherent paragraphs, stanzas, or sections that deal with similar bits of the argument. A good rule of thumb is to try to deal with all points relating to an issue in more or less the same place in your essay or presentation.
5. *Position.* An important term to think about when thinking about Assertions,

Claims and Arguments is 'position'. Every time you make a claim or assertion you are taking or adopting a position in relation to some matter. Having an argument means on one level taking ownership of and responsibility for the position you are adopting. This means more than simply gathering together statements from lecture notes or materials. It means thinking about the position from which you are making meaning. You may also need to think about and anticipate obvious counter-arguments to your position. A very important area to think about here is quoting. Students sometimes quote from a text as a way of establishing a particular position. But a key principle here is that quotes are not in themselves self-evident. They need unpacking for the reader. They should be contextualised and explained.

6. *Dialogue*. The issue of position is related to the question of dialogue. Scholarly communication is to a large extent about exploring different positions, and putting positions into conversation with one another. This conversation can be in a class between your peers or across centuries with authors whom you have never met. Your reference list at the end of an essay is in a sense a record of such a conversation. One of the amazing things about referencing is that it can allow you to have a conversation with a thinker writing 400 years or more ago. This issue of dialogue is relevant in terms of distinguishing between opinion and argument; a distinction to which you should be sensitive. Opinion is the expression of a personal or group perspective or view. It is a response to a topic or event. Arguments are deliberated on. They are built out of what has previously been said and written about in a particular field (thus the importance of creating a position that sits in a kind of dialogue with what has been said about a topic before). Understanding dialogue is crucial to understanding why plagiarism is such a serious charge. Plagiarism is where you take the position of another for your own. You take credit for someone else's position or words.
7. *Critical Thinking*. This could form a topic of a paper in its own right, but for our purpose here critical thinking involves thinking about the claims made by yourself and others, examining the presuppositions upon which those claims are based, and also examining the implications of adopting particular positions (e.g. If I say this about something, does it automatically mean this?). Critical thinking involves an awareness of the premises upon which your argument is based and which guide your conclusion.
8. *Responsibility*. One of the key aspects of scholarly communication is responsibility. After all, teachers and students alike are custodians of this thing called a 'discipline', a 'field', a university, and of academia. This responsibility can manifest itself in different ways. We have already mentioned the responsibility of defining your terms. There is also a responsibility to your reader, to present as clear and well-argued a piece as possible. There is a responsibility to accuracy, to representing the work of

others correctly and fairly. One of the cardinal sins of scholarly writing is getting the quote wrong, which is why ellipsis and square brackets are used to indicate changes or additions to quotes. Another sin is lack of proof-reading. Proof read your essay or any writing, don't just run a spell check. The spell checker will not pick up words that are spelt correctly but are not supposed to be there or bear the wrong meaning.

9. *Language*. Some might say we have a responsibility to language itself, to construct well formed and aesthetically beautiful sentences. Repetition of words is often frowned on in academic writing for this reason. The English language is diverse and rich and repetition can be regarded as sloppy and unnecessary. Try to avoid one-sentence paragraphs – they disrupt the flow of the essay. Consolidate different (but related) smaller paragraphs into larger ones. Smaller paragraphs are ok in reports and some journalism, but in essays the expectation is for paragraphs with greater organisation and coverage.
10. *Listening*. This is a key skill. Listening starts from the seminar room, where you should be listening to your fellow students, and finally applies to the writing process where you listen to yourself, and think about what you are writing. Listening can assist writing. Many academics read their essays aloud when writing them. Students under time pressure often don't leave time for re-writing and drafting. This means that grammar and proofreading can suffer, but it also means that there is less time to listen to what you are writing. A key part of listening that is worth highlighting is interpretation. Listening involves evaluating and interpreting what you hear.
11. *Engagement*. Scholarly engagement involves engaging with and evaluating the arguments of others. It is a unique form of activity. It involves assessing what the author is trying to do. It involves literature searches and keeping up-to-date with new developments. It often takes patience, and it helps to be curious. It is not always entertaining in the first instance, but this does not necessarily make it uninteresting or unrewarding. The fascinating thing is that you can learn as much from a failed argument as a successful one.

As you proceed through your course, hopefully you will begin to see the inter-relationship between these terms. Engagement is intertwined with position, and a deepening knowledge of the field. Language is linked to responsibility and critical thinking.

Although many of you will be entering professional fields, there are benefits in knowing the rules underpinning scholarly communication. The rules and conventions of scholarship provide an important set of literacy and job skills that you will find useful.

# Guide to Essay Writing

## Presentation and Style

### Format

Your essay should be typed if possible – if handwritten then the writing must be legible. You should also double-space your copy and leave margins of at least four cm on both sides of your page to allow the reader to comment. Text should only appear on one side of the page. For written essays a font such as Times or Palatino 12 pt is usually recommended. Page numbers should be provided.

### Structure

Your essay should include an introduction (in which you outline the theme of your essay and flag the issues you plan to address), a body (in which you explore the themes of your essay and present arguments supported by evidence, expert opinions and examples), and a conclusion (in which you briefly recap your arguments and draw conclusions). You may divide your essay into stanzas and use subheadings if you wish.

### Expression

Your goal should be to write as clearly and succinctly as possible. Avoid generalisations and always illustrate abstract concepts with examples taken from media texts where relevant or possible. Avoid jargon and make sure you explain any difficult concepts, quotes or specialist terms in your own words to demonstrate that you understand the concept.

### Quotations

Quotes less than three lines long should be enclosed by double quotation marks. Quotes within quotes should be identified by single quotations marks.

Quotes which are more than three lines long should be separated from the main text and indented. You should omit quotation marks.

For example:

In *The Elements of Style* William Strunk and E.B. White write:

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer makes all his sentences short, or that

he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.

For further tips about essay structure and style consult *The Write Site* elearning web-site. <http://writesite.elearn.usyd.edu.au/>

## References

Referencing is an essential component of academic writing and students **must** make every attempt to adhere to a referencing style. A number of style and citation guides are held by the library. For more information see - <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/subjects/readyref/citing.html>

### a) Titles

When referred to in your discussion, titles of books, films, television and radio programs, newspapers, and websites should be italicised, or underlined if the work is handwritten or produced on a typewriter. Titles of articles, book chapters and unpublished manuscripts or papers should be enclosed in quotation marks. It is not necessary to refer to the title of every text you cite, as usually the author's name and year will be enough to track down the work in the bibliography. Obviously, there may be instances when including the title enhances the quote you are referencing and/or the argument you are making.

### b) Footnotes/Endnotes/In-Text Referencing

You may use any referencing system (footnotes, endnotes, in-text referencing) you wish as long as you use it **consistently** and you include all of the key bibliographic elements required (author, title, place, publisher, etc.) Use our sample referencing system as a guide to what these key elements are. Because there are many referencing systems out there we have provided one, which is the Harvard author-date system. Please note that there are today many variants of Harvard, and the one suggested here is an example, but the most important thing is that you use it consistently.

## The author-date method

### b1. References (citations) in the text:

*One Author:*

According to Turner (1992).

Or

. . . while others disagree (Turner 1992). [note no comma]

If more than one author is cited, authors are cited in alphabetical order:

. . . disagree (Turner 1988; Williams 1990).

*Two Authors*

According to Herman and McChesney (1997: 1) ‘there has been a dramatic restructuring of national media industries’.

Or

It is notable that ‘there has been a dramatic restructuring of national media industries’ (Herman and McChesney 1997: 1), yet this need not be a cause for alarm.

*Three Authors or more:*

For three authors or more, the Harvard system notes only the first name followed by ‘et al.’. Full names **are** required in the list of references at the end of your essay or assignment.

*One Author quoted in the work of another:*

There is no need to put in details of both authors – rather you reference the work from which the quote was obtained. For example;

According to Hall, this is ‘what is meant by saying that the discourse constructs the spectator as a subject’ (in Wykes and Gunter 2005: 39).

Or

To suggest ‘that the discourse constructs the spectator as subject’ (Hall, in Wykes and Gunter 2005: 39) recognises the importance of context in analysis.

In the list of references, only the details of Wykes and Gunter are listed.

*Authored Chapter in an edited collection:*

If you are citing a chapter from edited collection, then the author of the chapter, **NOT**, the editors, are to be noted. For example, if quoting *The Media and Communications in Australia*, a collection of chapters edited by Cunningham and

Turner, all references would be to the specific authors within not to Cunningham and Turner (unless of course they author a chapter).

*Edited Collection:*

If you wish to make a general reference to an edited collection (not a chapter in that collection), then simply treat the editor/s as the authors, and list the work in the list of references (example provided below). The latter will tell the reader it is an edited collection.

*No Author:*

In instances where you are referencing from a newspaper article, report and so on that does not have an author, you should quote the title of the article. For example;

New studies have shown that publishing organisations are keen to explore the digital market ('Emap goes digital' 2002: 33)

The article appears in the list of references under the title, and alphabetically with authors starting with 'E'.

*Translations:*

In this instance, work is ascribed to the original author (i.e. Foucault) in text, with the translator noted in the References section.

*Use of Page Nos.:*

Please note, when you include a reference without a page number, you are referring to the whole of the work. For example:

According to Turner national identity is constructed through popular narratives and cultural myths (1993).

Referencing in this way shows you are summarising the main argument of a book, article, chapter, etc.

A page number must be cited if any material is quoted and/or paraphrased. For example:

... Turner argues, 'it can be misleading to expect newspapers to fit exactly into a two-press model' (1992: 45).

Or,

Turner argues that the two-press model might be misleading as a model for all newspapers (1992: 45).

Including the reference details at the end of the quote or paraphrased quote signals to the reader where the referenced work ends and your own argument recommences.

*No Page Nos.:*

Page numbers are not necessary (in text) if the article is a single page. This format can be applied for Internet resources. Please refer below for details relating to end referencing.

*Long Quotations:*

Quotes that are 25 words or longer should be indented and single-spaced.

*Note: The placement of the period or full stop should always be at the end of the sentence, which is after the bracket. The only exception is with an indented quote.*

*Repeated References:*

Within the space of a single paragraph the year of publication may be omitted if you have already provided the details. For example;

At the beginning of a paragraph, you might quote from Hartley (1999: 56). Within the same paragraph, if you are quoting from the same source, you can quote without the year of publication I.e. either Hartley (78) or (Hartley: 78).

*While this guide is focussing on the Author-Date system there is a brief point to be made about repeated references and footnotes. In the first reference to a work you must supply full details. But in subsequent references, use minimal references (e.g. Hartley 199: 78). Do not use Ibid or Op Cit.*

## b2. List of References

All works cited should be listed alphabetically as *References* at the conclusion of the essay.

### **Books**

Souter, Gavin (1981), *Company of Herald's*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press.

Wykes, Maggie and Gunter, Barrie (2005), *The Media and Body Image*, London, Sage Publications.

Note: Only *one* publication address, usually the first that appears on the inside title page (not the cover), is noted.

Follow this system for books with multiple authors (i.e. all names are to be listed).

If a work has been translated, include the name of translators:

Habermas, Jürgen (1982), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, Thomas Burger and Frederick Frederick (trans.), Cambridge, The MIT Press.

## **Journals**

Lacy, Stephen, Fico, Frederick and Simon, Todd (1991), 'Fairness and balance in the prestige press', *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 68, pp.363-370.

Turner, Geoff (1992), 'Information underload: Recent trends in the *Courier-Mail* information news content', *Australian Studies in Journalism*, Vol.1, pp. 43-72.

Note that the titles of journals are italicised and in title case, while the article title is presented in lower case (except for nouns).

## **Book Chapters**

There is no need to name the chapter of a book if it has a sole author. If you are quoting from an edited collection, both the author(s) of the chapter and the editor(s) should be noted. For example;

Goggin, Gerard (2006), 'The Internet, online and mobile cultures', in Stuart Cunningham and Graeme Turner (eds.), *The Media and Communications in Australian, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, pp.259-278

## **Edited Collections**

If you are referring a collection as a whole;

Cunningham, Stuart and Turner, Graeme (2006) (eds.), *The Media and Communications in Australian, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

## Newspaper articles

Should be cited in the same way as for journals, except for variation around the date/volume nos.:

Porter, Henry (1992), 'Royals and the rat pack', *Australian*, 11 June, p.11.

For articles with no author given, use the form:

'Editorial', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 January 1998, p.32

## Internet sources

The underlying principles for referencing material available through the World Wide Web (Internet) are largely the same as for other formats. The additions for items read or acquired over the Internet are the format, version, file address, and the date retrieved or accessed.

The elements of online reference citations are:

- author's surname and initial(s).
- year of publication,
- title of the article or document
- title of the book or publication
- format.
- name of the publisher,
- place of publication.
- version.
- address or location
- date retrieved or accessed [in square brackets].

Not all elements will be present in each reference. For many Internet resources the address will be the Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

This often takes a form similar to that below:

<http://www.csu.edu.au/division/library/index.htm>

Since the address, format and content of many electronic sources are inherently unstable, it is recommended that the date of your visit to the host site be included along with the publication date of the material viewed where this is given. For example:

Journal article from a database:

Ali, Tariq (2005), 'Globalisation and democracy after Iraq', *Arena Magazine*, No.77, pp.25-29 [online]. Available: APA-FT: Australian Public Affair Full Text database. [Accessed 15 July, 2002]

Newspaper Article:

Petridis, Alexis (2002), 'Pop of the tots', in the *Guardian*, 30 August, 2002 [online]. Available: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/critic/feature/0,1169,782431,00.html> [Accessed 10 October, 2002]

Government Report/Release:

Goldie, Norman (1999), *CSIRO Media Release: Korea, Australia to share environment satellite* (online). 20 May 1999. Available: <http://www.csiro.au/news/mediarel/mr1999/mr99107.html> [Accessed 26 May 1999].

Works without known authors are cited by title:

*Writing HTML: A tutorial for creating www pages* (online). 1995, Version 1.5. Available: <http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu:80/tut/> [Accessed 9 Aug. 1995].

Where the publication date is not available use 'n.d.'.

Galimany, Michael (n.d.), *A visual aspect: Images of the State Library of Victoria* (online). Available: <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/slv/exhibitions/pictures/7/> [Accessed 18 May 1999].

Punctuation must be exact. This is essential for electronic addresses. Since punctuation is such an important part of an Internet address, certain conventions of citation punctuation have necessarily been changed and/or adapted. Addresses are often case sensitive and always require the exact order, spacing and punctuation in order to provide a successful connection to the service. Be particularly careful in recording the position of stops and slashes.

When quoting online material in an online document, you can provide an active [hypertext link](#) directly to the source from your list of references, but you must provide the URL as well. The latter is necessary in case someone chooses to print out the document and needs to follow up or verify some of the references.

## Electronic and other Non-print sources (TV, Radio, etc)

Specify the medium in brackets immediately after the title and include the location and name of the distributor. Thus:

*150 years of photography: An American image* (video recording). 1988, Eastman Kodak, New York.

*Aborigines of the Canberra region* (kit). 1982, Aboriginal studies kit developed by ACT Schools Authority in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the National Aboriginal Education Committee. ACT School Authority, Canberra.

**Television** productions are identified as video recordings or television programs. Include details of when they were broadcast.

*The highwayman: Bill Gates and the superhighway* (television program), 1995, ABC Television, broadcast 6 March.

*Media Watch* (television program), 2005, ABC Television, broadcast April 12.

Referencing for **Radio** requires you to include as much information as possible. So, for example, if the time of the broadcast is relevant to distinguish it from other programs then it should be included. If you are citing an interview and/or particular program that is part of a series, then details of both should be included. If you are citing from a transcript, then details of where the transcript was located should be included.

Some examples:

‘Cash for Comment’ (radio program), 2006, *Background Briefing*, ABC Radio National, broadcast 4 June.

*Children and the Internet* (radio program), 2002, ABC Radio National, broadcast 2 June. Transcript available at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/tranlist.htm> [Accessed 4 June, 2002].

**Films** can include the year of release, the name of the director and (if known) the distributor.

*La Dolce Vita* (film), 1960, Director: Federico Fellini.

Where individual authors are identified, treat these as for books.

Adamson, Edward (1988), *Trees and rural productivity* (microform). Ministry of Planning and Environment, Melbourne.

When the source of information is a database spanning several years, it is not necessary to include the range of years covered, but producer, vendor and frequency of updating should be included.

*Medline* (database). National Library of Medicine, Vendor: Silverplatter, monthly updating.

## **Guide to Attribution in Journalism**

### **Introduction**

Print and online journalists (news reporters and feature writers) attribute sources in a different manner from scholarly writers. Journalism does not use footnotes or in-text parenthetical attribution.

Attribution of sources is incorporated into sentences in the body copy. These may be quotes or paraphrasing from:

- interviewees (direct speech, indirect speech, partial quotes, summary statements)
- documents such as reports or press releases
- books and journal articles
- or other media such as radio, television and websites -

Identifying the source gives journalism credibility and guides your reader to the origin of your facts, opinions and quotes. The key to good attribution is never to leave your readers wondering where you got your information from.

### **Basic principles**

There are some ideal attribution practices in print journalism:

- attribute any direct speech (full quotation), indirect speech (paraphrase) or partial quotes (mix of direct quote and paraphrase) back to the person or organization
- if you did not witness an event yourself, attribute the information to the person or source who did
- if a fact is ‘common knowledge’ it does not need to be attributed. Exactly what constitutes common knowledge will depend on the level of knowledge you can assume of your readership
- never fabricate (invent) a quote or a person
- if you are taking a quote, a fact, an opinion from another source, you **MUST** incorporate where and/or who that quote came from into your writing.
- Attribution must also accompany paraphrasing. For example, ‘Clinton told *The New York Times* that he did not have sex with his intern.’

## Reporting Speech

News reporting and feature journalism have different methods when using speech tags to attribute quotes from interviewees.

### a) News

In **news reporting**, the speech tag (also known as ‘verbs of utterance’) tends to be ‘he said’ or ‘she said’.

Avoid the temptation to use more colourful saying verbs (for example, he chortled, she bantered, he grimaced, she laughed). Although the standard saying verb ‘said’ may seem repetitive and dull, this is exactly the point. The aim is to draw attention to the quote as information, not to the journalist’s interpretation of the interviewee’s emotion or affect. If it seems essential to provide your reader with emotional information, write, for example, ‘she said with a snort’. You can also provide emotional background through your physical description of the interviewee or through the quote itself.

Place the speech tag after a short quote, or single sentence quote from your interviewee.

‘I am furious, unbelievably furious,’ he said.  
(Please note, the comma comes *before* the end quotation mark.)

If the quote continues for more than one sentence, put the speech tag at the first clause or sentence break. The aim here is to let your reader know who is speaking as soon as possible. Even for long quotes, only one speech tag is necessary unless the quote is interrupted with other material.

If you introduce an interviewee in a full sentence before the quote begins, a speech tag after the quote is not necessary. For example:

Dr Emerson said that after yesterday's talks with the industry he believed the project was unworkable.

'For the site to be of great value to customers, ... [it] needs to be relevant at the individual store level.'

Try to avoid placing the speech tag at the beginning of the sentence. When this does occur, in news reporting the preferred punctuation is a colon, especially if there is more than one sentence following. For example:

Asked whether Wayne Swan should also co-operate, she said: 'I think the issue here is one for Mr Turnbull.

'Mr Turnbull has, of course, had his credibility squarely raised about these matters.'

Note here that the end quote mark is omitted until the quote is finished. Each new speaker requires a new paragraph.

## b) Features

In **feature writing**, attribution style for speech quotes is slightly different. The preferred saying verb for the speech tag is 'says' – he says, she says. This depends on the effect the journalist wants to achieve. The present tense saying verb increases the story's sense of immediacy and can make the copy more lively. (This is known as the 'historic present'.)

In feature writing there is more room for including emotional or affective observation in speech tags. You might find more colourful saying verbs, such as 'she laughed' or 'he grinned'. Try not to overdo this style of attribution. The descriptive phrase after the neutral saying verb is often more effective, for example: 'he says with a grin'.

In feature journalism the colon is generally not used to introduce a quote. Generally, use the comma (if you must begin a sentence with a speech tag).

She says, "I really mean it!"

## Quoting Secondary Sources

When quoting from secondary sources, attribution is important but in nowhere near the detail of scholarly referencing.

Books, journal articles, websites, press releases, reports and other media, are identified by title and author (if applicable) or organisation. Dates can be as general as 'recent' or 'this year'.

Websites can be shortened, leaving out the www. If a website is used extensively as a source, you can refer to the full website address at the end of your feature.

## Honorifics

In **news reporting** people are always referred to as Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms or other honorifics (for example, Professor or Dr) with each use of their surname. On the first use of their name, use title and both first and second names. Thereafter, just use the title or honorific and surname.

**In features**, after the first introduction of title or honorific and both names, simply refer to the subject by their surname. This applies to Professors and Doctors as well as ordinary people.

Note that house style of different publications will determine whether the subject will be referred to by first or second name. And some publications will (rarely) use a colon before quotes.

Examine the house style of the publication you are writing for.

For a good discussion of attribution in journalism, see Steve Buttry, 'You can quote me on that'.

Available: <http://www.notrain-nogain.org/Train/Res/Ethics/Eattrib.asp> [Accessed 30 June, 2009]

## Online attribution

When writing for the web or intranet delivery you should follow basic print attribution conventions, but add hyperlinks to relevant source or contextual materials.

Hyperlinks, hotlinks or links, as they are most often known, are a form of attribution that directs users to online versions of:

1. your original documentary sources (for example, media releases, speeches, reports); and
2. other web materials that give useful interpretive background to your story (for example, biographies, timelines, journal articles).

Although you should write your links out in full on your final draft copy, for publication you or the sub-editor will ‘embed’ the link. This means choosing a phrase in your attributive sentence that indicates where the hyperlink will lead your website user. This phrase will become the link to the other text. For example:

Final draft: The Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has condemned a coal industry report on global warming responses <<http://www.coal2020.com.au/report.pdf>> that argues Labor’s carbon trading scheme is a disaster waiting to happen.

Published version: The Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has condemned [a coal industry report on global warming responses](http://www.coal2020.com.au/report.pdf) that argues Labor’s carbon trading scheme is a disaster waiting to happen.

When you are embedding a link most content management systems (digital systems for creating, editing, storing and sharing content) will demand that you enter the full web address including the transfer protocol at the head (eg. <http://> or <https://>) and the full domain location including the www.

Not all users follow link trails, so it is important to properly attribute your sources in your text. However you may use shortened versions of book or report titles where you link to a document stating the full title.

Attribution practices online are in a process of flux as new forms of media practice emerge. For this reason if you are quoting material from another site it is imperative to first inform the author, to credit him/her fully and to link back to the original document on their site. There have been endless debates online about the level of permission required for this type of use, but this is the baseline attribution practice.

Many site owners will request you ask permission to link to them, so that they can monitor how you are using and attributing their content. Notifying site owners is a good practice to follow as they may alert you to out-of-date content or impending changes to site structure that would render your link useless. They cannot stop you linking to their site for purposes of comment or critique.

Links are also used to credit photographers or images makers for their work. An image will be captioned with the copyright owner's name and a link to his her business site or the original version of the image.



Main quad.

Image: Fiona Martin <[www.lucida.com.au](http://www.lucida.com.au)>

For more discussion about attribution online see:

Andy Baio (2009) 'Attribution and Affiliation on All Things Digital', Available: [http://waxy.org/2009/04/all\\_things\\_digital\\_and\\_transparency\\_in\\_online\\_journalism/](http://waxy.org/2009/04/all_things_digital_and_transparency_in_online_journalism/) [Accessed 30 June 2009]

'Voices', *Washington Post Online*, Available: <http://allthingsd.com/about/voices/> [Accessed 30 June 2009]

# **Guide to Seminar Participation and Attendance**

## **Attendance**

Each postgraduate unit of study requires students to attend at least 80% of face-to-face classes. This is at least 10 classes per unit of study in one 13 week semester. (Intensively taught units of study will be treated accordingly.)

Please keep in mind that the more classes you attend the higher your participation mark will be. Failure to attend 10 classes will not only result in a fail mark for participation, but you will also risk failing the unit. Please be aware that if you do miss a class, you might be asked to do make up work so that you don't fall behind the other students.

If you are unable to attend at least 10 classes, please consult with your Unit Coordinator.

If you are unable to attend a class in which you have previously agreed to present work, it is vital that you let your teacher know beforehand.

If you are unable to attend a class in which your project group is presenting work, or completing critical work, it is vital that you let your other group members know, in addition to informing the teacher.

If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a class, even where you are not making a formal presentation, it is still considered courteous to let your teacher know, via email, beforehand.

If you feel that you are experiencing difficulty with your attendance more generally, or with participation in class, please speak privately with your teacher about your concerns. (See the Guide For Postgraduate Coursework Students for information if you require further help.)

## **Ethics of engagement**

Nearly all postgraduate units of study in Media and Communications are based on a seminar format, which rely on group discussion for their success. The ethics of engagement refers to the way in which this discussion is organised, and the code of ethics on which it is based, so as to ensure that all members of the group are

fostered equally and have their right to learn protected at all times. The following list provides some examples of an ethics of engagement:

- Regular and punctual attendance to class
- Displaying attentiveness in class through listening and contributing to group discussion
- Supporting the right of others to speak
- Respecting diverse points-of-view while also engaging with them
- Respecting cultural difference, and supporting students who are less confident in speaking up
- Paying attention to the dynamics of the learning group so as to maximise the involvement of all students, and to create a safe atmosphere in which all students are encouraged to express their views
- Recognising that we are all learning from each other, and not only from the teacher
- Respecting the right of the teacher to regulate discussion and make organisational decisions
- Ensuring that your mobile phone and any other electronic devices are switched off

*In addition to the attendance requirement, the participation mark in your unit of study is based on the following criteria:*

### **Preparation**

- Adequate preparation for class, including a close reading of the material contained in your Course Reader for that week
- Evidence of this preparation in the form of questions for discussion in class
- Evidence of this preparation in the form of a formal seminar presentation as required from time-to-time by the teacher
- Evidence of further reading about the subject as contained in the recommended reading list or other self-initiated research
- Evidence that you have made use of the Academic Writing Advisor if you are concerned about your writing and presentation skills

### **Participation**

- Ethical participation through respectful listening to the teacher and other students during discussion and presentation of material

- Ability to contribute to this discussion based on your knowledge and understanding of the reading material
- Ability to contribute to discussion in response to the contributions of others
- Ability to participate in small-group discussions and group assignments as well as in whole-of-class discussions
- Willingness to lead discussion when dividing into small groups
- Willingness to keep notes of small-group discussions
- Willingness to report back to class on behalf of the group
- Willingness to participate in groups for assessment and to commit to the project so as to contribute as an equal
- Willingness to seek clarification from your teacher if anything is unclear
- Encouraging a mutually supportive environment through acknowledging and assisting the efforts of other students to participate fully in class

*For information on applying for extensions, special consideration and other procedural matters, please refer to the Guide for Postgraduate Coursework Students available from the MECO Department, Level 2, Holme Building (AO9)*